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"Of the co-operation of Prussia there seems to be less *hope*, though I should think *fear* a more proper term."—Mr. Fox's Speech of 21st June, 1805.

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SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

CONTINENTAL WAR.—This was the title, under which was submitted to the readers of the Register the series of facts and observations relating to that contest, which, between the months of August and January last, extended the power and the dominion of France from the banks of the Rhine to the confines of Hungary, which took from the House of Austria a considerable part of its territories in Germany, its distinguishing title of Emperor of Germany, all its Italian territories, which drove the King of Naples from his continental dominions, which raised a Frenchman to the throne of Naples, which caused another Frenchman to be made king of Holland, which created two new kings between France and Prussia, and which gave rise to the confederation of the Rhine. In again taking up the same title, I should be glad to be able to express an expectation of having to record, and to comment upon events of an exactly opposite description; but, while I hear the newspaper writers in general expressing their anxious *hope*, that Prussia has, at least, resolved upon war against France, I must confess, that, with Mr. Fox, in the words taken for my motto, I think that *fear* would be a far more suitable term.—What is it that men expect from the war, which they now tell us is about to commence upon the continent? I do not ask what they expect favourable to England, for I know, that, whatever is favourable to the independence and security of the several states upon the continent must also be favourable to us; but, I ask, generally, what they expect of good from this approaching war. The writers, to whom I have alluded, answer, that they expect, or, at least, they hope for, the "deliverance of Europe." This is a phrase of large, but of very vague, signification. To ask them to be specific would, perhaps, be thought unreasonable. Yet, surely, in such a case, those who are advocates for the enterprize, ought to be able to tell us what they hope for from it, and that, too, somewhat in detail. "To deliver Europe, to repress the ambition, and to chastise the insolence, of the tyrant of France,"

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were the objects of the shallow-headed boaster, Pitt. What is it, then, once more I ask, that you hope for from this new coalition and war? Is it to reduce the power of France? Is it to drive her out of Holland and Italy, or either of them? Is it to compel her to submit to such terms of peace as she now rejects with disdain? Be the hope what it may, one thing is evident, that it must be founded, if it has any foundation at all, upon the presumption, that the allies are able to beat the French Emperor in the field; and, I really do not believe, that there is in all England one single man of plain good sense, and of common information upon the subject, who entertains such a presumption.—We are told, indeed, by certain public writers, that the armies of France are not nearly so numerous as those of the allies; upon which we cannot fail to remark, that, *before* a battle, the French armies are always, by these writers, represented as inferior in numbers, and, that always, *after* a French victory, the allies are represented as inferior in numbers. We are told, that it is with the utmost difficulty, that the French armies are kept recruited; that the pompous accounts of the men raised in France are false; that the people of France begin to perceive (they have been a long while beginning!) that they are shedding their blood for the ambition of Napoleon alone and not for French interest; that they are averse to the war, and are, accordingly, cold and backward as to all the steps necessary to its prosecution; that, in the Prussian states, on the contrary, the greatest degree of attachment to the "*beloved sovereign*" (they are always beloved when they are on *our side*!), and of enthusiasm in his cause, pervades all ranks of the people, and that the army, consisting of the bravest and best-disciplined soldiers in the world, burn with eagerness for the onset. The Russians, we are told, are pouring down in hundreds of thousands to back the Prussians; and, finally, we are solemnly assured, that Austria is, with *renovated vigour*, preparing to send her immense armies through Moravia and Bohemia, the *Levy en Masse* having been rendered permanent

in Hungary.—All this we are now told; and all this, in almost precisely the same words, we were told this time twelve months, or, a few weeks before the capture of *Ulm*. Prussia was then expected to join the coalition as Austria now is, and the epithet, “believed,” which is now given to Frederick, was then bestowed upon poor Francis! Delusion seems to be necessary unto us. We appear to suck in deception as naturally as a calf empties the udder of its dam. Quacks of all sorts are our delight, and we seem to have a decided partiality for German quackeries. This must be, or would it not be impossible for any public print to obtain circulation with statements, such as I have just alluded to, in its columns? I do not say, that the King of Prussia is unwise in trying the effect of war; for, it may be, that he is convinced, that he would, in a short time, be annihilated in peace; and that, of course, war gives him the advantage of a *chance* of salvation. What I find fault of is, the holding out of hopes of a deliverance to Europe by this war, which, if entered upon at all by Prussia, is evidently the effect, not of hope on her part, but of despair.—As to the numerical strength of France on the one side, and of the allies on the other side, I should imagine, that the advantage might be with the latter; but, to counterbalance this, France has so many other advantages, that there appears to me not the least hope of her being finally defeated. And, indeed, without resorting to detail, what need have we of any other presumption in her favour than that which is so amply furnished us in the history of the last war? Prussia, we shall be told, was not then engaged. But, the more formidable power of Austria was engaged; Russia was also engaged; and, is there any man who will seriously say that he expects to see better generals employed now than was employed then? Does any man expect to see the Russians fight better than they did before? Does any one see more difficulties in the way of France now, than she had in her way then? *We*, indeed, are now, we are told, to act a part, in Holland, or in the North; but, we before co-operated with Austria in the South, and we had an army, too, ready to co-operate with the allies in the North. In short, France has again to fight, in the great field of Europe, with enemies of nearly the same strength as upon the last occasion; but, with her own means greatly increased. And, if this be the fact, can we possibly expect, that the result of the present war will be disastrous to France?—How many times, since the summer of 1803,

have I endeavoured to caution my readers against the attempts to persuade them, that the *people* of France would be an obstacle to Napoleon's career of ambition and of conquest! How often have I repeated to them my reasons for placing no hope upon this foundation! And, how fully have events verified my predictions! Not only have I never come at any fact to warrant a hope of this kind; but, I can see not the least ground for such a hope in the reason of the case; for, whether we argue from the situation of the people of France, as produced or affected by their government; or, from the consequences naturally and generally flowing from the achievements of a renowned ruler; or, from the character of the French nation in particular; we shall, I think, conclude, that, if it were possible wholly to exclude discontent from a population of 30 millions of souls, it would be now excluded from the dominions of France. And, as to the nation, that the people “begin to perceive” that Napoleon has an interest separate “from theirs,” it can never have proceeded but from a brain somewhat crazed. They perceive no such thing. Love of glory, and of military glory, is their great characteristic. Every Frenchman wishes his country to be the mistress of the world; and he loves the man, be he who or what he may, that will conduct her in the pursuit. Like horses and dogs, the French people are harassed and sweated and torn and sometimes killed in the chase, but, as to delight in the sport, not one of them yields to the hunter himself. Our error, as to the feelings of the French people towards Napoleon, arises from our judging of them by ourselves. Here, where a love of wealth is become predominant, because, particularly since the rule of Pitt, wealth alone obtains distinction, a love of national glory is become almost entirely extinct. A man who aims at a title by increasing his sums in the funds and by the purchase of boroughs can have no idea of military glory. He regards every soldier as a miserable slave, or as a mad-man. A people, who see bankers made Lords, are no more able to judge of the feelings of the people of France, than a man born blind is able to judge of colours. Above all things, therefore, would I caution those, who are indulgent enough to read what I write, not to listen to those writers, who would persuade them, that England may expect advantage, that she may derive safety, from a disposition in the people of France hostile to their present ruler especially; nor can I see, at present, any reason to suppose, why his successor, if treading in his steps, should not

be as implicitly obeyed as himself.—There is one consolatory reflection relating to the present war, and that is, that it cannot render the situation of the Continent *worse* than it now is; for, as to those who are subjects, it would be difficult to conceive how their miseries and degradation are to receive an increase from a change of masters; and, as to the present masters, it seems evident that war can only a little hasten their fate, unless a reformation could be effected in their governments, and particularly in the conduct of the higher orders of their subjects. The old states, as Mr. Burke observed in his earnest and pathetic exhortation to them, seem all prone downwards; there is, amongst too many of the leading men in them, a strange and unnatural mixture of more than feminine timidity and of more than masculine profligacy. Wherever the armies of France penetrate, they find a people totally inert, or ready to receive them with open arms; and, it is strikingly true, that, if they have lately met with enemies in Italy, it was there only, where the people, living in a state of semi-barbarism, knew nothing, or very little, of their sovereign or of his government. We, here, in this country, though labouring under many and grievous and increasing hardships, are by no means qualified to judge of the dispositions and the motives of the people of the states which France has overrun. We, who, though fallen very far from the situation in which our fathers left us, have still our courts, where justice, with as few exceptions as can be expected, is impartially administered; we have still our civil liberties unimpaired, and though our political liberties have been abridged, it has been from the operation of unpremeditated influence, and not from any disposition, in any quarter, to tyrannize over us; we have still our property, and though it be loaded and shackled by the powers of taxation, the far greater part of us admit the necessity, and all of us live in hopes of seeing the day when, by one means or another, it will be freed; we, though we have lost all love of military glory, have still many and powerful motives to love our country, and to endeavour to preserve it untouched by the arms of our invader. Thus situated, and thus actuated, we are, however, not competent judges of the motives of the people of the continental states. We always fall into the error of regarding every people invaded by France as a people situated as we are; we make a comparison between our own laws and government and the laws and government of France, and then we apply that comparison to every state that France in-

vades, and we inveigh, accordingly, against the folly and the baseness of the unresisting people. But, were we to inquire into the situation of such a people; were we, instead of being amused with the descriptions of "happy people and beloved sovereign," given us by those writers, whose trade it is to amuse us; instead of this, were we to spend some small portion of our time in inquiring into the real causes of the small resistance which the French have met with, from the people, in their several acts of invasion, the subject of our wonder would, in most cases, be, that they had met with any such resistance at all. To the greatest physical power that Europe ever saw collected in one state, is added, in favour of France, a moral power equally unparalleled; and, against these two powers united, do we any where see opposed one man renowned for his valour or his wisdom? Do we see any thing but mere mercenary armies that never gained a victory, led by generals, who, amongst scores of them, have not a single sprig of laurel to divide?—Yet, though these reasons present themselves to my mind against encouraging the hope of our deriving any benefit from the approaching war, and though I can easily see, that it must be attended with new and heavy taxes imposed upon us, I am not prepared to say, that our ministers are to blame for having encouraged the undertaking of it. What has been said for the King of Prussia may, perhaps, be said for them; that they have a *chance* of preventing by war, that which *must* have been accomplished by peace. We must see the manifestoes; we must hear the reasons alleged, before we can judge correctly as to whether they have, in this case, acted wisely or not. My opinion, which I have already given, is, that hopeless as the affairs of the Continent are now, chiefly from the mismanagement of Pitt and his minions, become, it would be our wisest way, to let the Continent alone, not to expend one penny for fifty Hanovers, to make such a reform in our financial system as would enable us to remain armed and to annoy the enemy, until affairs upon the Continent should of themselves take a more favourable turn, dreading nothing so much as that, by useless exertions upon the Continent, we should enfeeble ourselves and render the burdened people indifferent to the fate of their country, just at the moment when Napoleon, having completely subdued the Continent, would be ready to direct his whole force towards England. This is my opinion; but, I will not, until all the facts are before me, say, that another trial upon the Continent

may not have been dictated by wisdom, and that, in such a situation of things, the chance of good may not have fairly outweighed the risk of evil.—As to the number of troops that we are, or ought, to employ upon this occasion, I, of course, can, as yet, form no judgment; nor can I know any thing about the probable point of their destination; but, there is one remark, which I cannot help making, and that is, that, amongst all the regiments which I have seen upon the embarkation list, I have not seen any of the *Hanoverians*, of whom we have, according to the lowest account, *thirteen thousand* in this country! That these heroes might not relish the East or West Indies or the Mediterranean or North America; that they might prefer the mild climate of England to the scorching of the South or the freezing of the North, I could easily conceive; but, supposing, especially when I look back, that they must burn, that they must be scorching up to cinders, with impatience to join in the “deliverance of Europe,” and particularly of their own dear country, I am, I must freely confess it, quite filled with astonishment, to give no other name to my feelings, to see such a long embarkation-list, and not a single man of them upon it. It is understood, of course, that all these Hanoverians, have come to England out of pure love to their sovereign, joined to a very natural and very laudable hatred of the French, who had invaded their country; and, is it not something to be censured in our public writers, that, while they are exultingly anticipating the prowess of *British* troops in this new continental war, they say not one word about the prowess of the *Hanoverians*, but, in all their calculations, except those of provisions, seem to follow the example of the libellous Yankees, and to count them as nothing. I am aware, that I shall be reminded, that we have much to hope in the way of *improvement* from the manners, &c. &c. of those amiable and loyal foreigners; but, whatever opinion I may have as to the good which the present or the succeeding generation of Englishmen may derive from their residence here, I must still insist, that it is cruel to keep them from sharing in that glory, which for the reasons before stated, they have an unquestionable right to share in. I am as ready as any body to acknowledge the advantages that must accrue to the service from their exemplary conduct, from their sobriety, from their cleanliness, from the wisdom inseparable from their contemplative habit of smoking, and particularly from their singing psalms in battalion and in the open streets,

to the almost petrefaction of the hardened sinners of our service and of the towns and farmers waggons that happen to be blessed with their company; but, while I readily acknowledge these advantages, I am full as ready to give up whatever share of them may fall to me, and I do trust, that there is scarcely a man in this country so selfish as to wish to retain them here, while their valour and their loyalty are, doubtless, constantly goading them on to go and join their brothers in arms in the glorious enterprize, the deliverance of Hanover and of Europe.

NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE.—Lord Lauderdale returned to Dover, from Paris, on the 12th instant, after a mission of about two months. What he was empowered to do we shall probably be informed of; but, unless he was fully empowered to treat upon very low terms indeed, it was evident, from the first, that he would not succeed in concluding a peace.—It is stated, in the newspapers, that, when the Mayor of London, or the Lord Mayor, as he is called (and, indeed, *Lord* seems to be a very proper title for a great tradesman, seeing upon what principles men are now made Lords); when this Lord communicated the news to his brothers of the Stock Exchange and other such places about the Bank, it is stated that the inhabitants of those regions saluted him with three cheers, and that one from amongst them observed, that this mark of the spirit of the metropolis, would, when heard of at Paris, “*appal* the tyrant of France!” The news, as it was conveyed through the country “drew from the people, in the several towns and villages, similar demonstrations of joy; that the cry was, *eternal war rather than an insecure peace*; and that, in one town, an *illumination* was actually “proposed.” The spirited gentlemen of the ‘Change must excuse me if I express some small doubts as to the expected efficacy of their three cheers. Those cheers may, possibly, serve to delude a few poor wretches to contribute towards their riches; but, upon “the tyrant of France,” they will have no more effect than would the mewling of so many cats. He, or he is a most uninformed ass, knows very well how to estimate the worth of their cheerings. Were it his intention to invade us with an army of turtles or of turbot, then, indeed, he might have reason to fear the spirit of the metropolis; but, if ever he comes here, it will be with a sort of creatures, for which the Stock Exchange Gentlemen will have very little stomach.—To the New Opposition, and to me in particular, this cry of “eternal war”

is very amusing. I remember how the base rabble, high as well as low, treated me for refusing to give demonstrations of joy at the infamous peace of Amiens. I remember how the charge of wishing for "eternal war" was wrung in the ears of Mr. Windham. I remember how the base citizens rejoiced at that peace. Their illuminations, their transparencies, their abject and detestable emblems are still fresh in my mind. I remember the praises bestowed upon the time-serving place-hunting Jenkinsons. I have stored up in my recollection, all the villainies of those times; all the cant of courtiers, and all the abominable trimming of the newspapers and the reviews. That was the time of my life when I saw human nature in its most hideous form; that I beheld baseness the most complete that I ever beheld in my life; and, I do frankly confess, that I am not sorry to see it punished. Yes, I do remember, when the vile wretches, high as well as low, vied with each other in showing their gratitude to Mr. Otto, and when many of the fashionable strumpets thought themselves happy in being permitted to give a route to his wife, upon exactly the same principle that the savages of some parts of the world are said to worship the devil. I remember seeing Lauriston drawn in triumph by Englishmen; and I never shall forget, that the newspapers (the very same that are now pouring forth execrations upon Napoleon) then abused every one that dared to express a fear, that his intention was not to suffer us long to remain in peace. And last, though certainly not least, I remember when Mr. Peltier was tried in the Court of King's Bench for speaking irreverently of this man, who is now represented as a devil in human shape; and, to the eternal dishonour of the English press, I remember when the London and the Country newspapers applauded the prosecutor and the prosecution, which latter they represented as "necessary to preserve harmony between the two countries." All this I remember, and, remembering it, I am not to be easily moved to compassion towards the nation that was guilty of it.—I have, when speaking of the effects of the system that has long been bringing us into our present state, often observed, that the proof of our weakness, when compared to the enemy was, that we knew not whether to wish for war or for peace, and that the aspect of the latter was, and must continue to be, as hideous, or more so, than that of the former. I have often said, that, while our present system continues, we must be in continual dread of the effects

of peace as well as of the effects of war. I have often said, that, while this system continues, England will never again know one hour of real peace. And, is my opinion now singular? Are there not many who think with me? Is there any man who can show, that the reasons, upon which this opinion is founded, are not sound? Has not the last few days proved, that this is now becoming the general opinion?—I am told, perhaps, that, if this negotiation has failed, another may succeed. When? And why should it? The result of the new continental war may lower the tone of Napoleon. It is possible; but is it not possible also, nay, is it not probable, that it may raise his tone? And, if his terms are inadmissible now, what will they be then?—These are questions that it behoves every man to put to himself. If he be, indeed, a wretch, who, hoping that the day of destruction will be put off to the end of his own life, cares not a straw for what happens afterwards, he may have some hope, for it may please God to rid the world of him very speedily; but, if he has any thought for posterity; if he has one spark of the love of country in his bosom, it behoves him to consider what is to be done, when the day of again negotiating with the conqueror, still more elated, shall arrive. "Would the Right Honourable Gentleman *never* have peace?" said the manly Addington, with the mob at his back, to Mr. Windham. That question I now put to the eternal-war men. "Will you *never* let us have peace?" No, say they, unless we can have *safety* with it. Aye; why that was my wish at a time when you might have had a safe peace, or might have carried on the war with a *chance*, at least, of success. But, now you cannot have a peace of safety, and you cannot carry on the war with a chance of success, the very utmost of your hopes being, that you shall be able to prevent yourselves from becoming the slaves, the real conquered slaves, of France. Do your hopes extend further? Where is the man amongst you, who has larger hopes? I ask that frothy bombastical declaimer, who, in humble imitation of Pitt, strings me together endless sentences about the commercial greatness, the inexhaustible resources, and the unconquerable spirit of England; I ask even him, what are his hopes? He cannot tell me. He uses many high sounding words; but no rational cause can he assign why our situation should not proceed, as it has done, from bad to worse; and, his conclusion always is, a bare assertion, that Englishmen *never* will be slaves.—To save the country from being

conquered, however, requires a way of thinking very different from this. A settled plan of long resistance must be fixed on. The whole nation must be brought to adopt it in their hearts, and to act upon it with vigour and with cheerfulness. There must be a change in our system. New spirit must be infused into us. We are now existing along from expedient to expedient, without the support of any fixed principle. Without being able to form even a probable conjecture as to what is to be our fate. And, if the ministers themselves were asked; if those profound political economists, Sir John Newport and Lord Grenville were asked, how they will be able to carry on the financial affairs of the country for only two years longer, they would be as much at a loss for an answer as any one of their door-keepers would be, if the same question were put to him. There is *no plan*. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," is still our maxim. "Existing circumstances" are still the ground of our actions. There is no minister who has yet said to the country, such and such are my specific objects, and to the attaining of these objects all other considerations shall give way. Even now much more do the ministers think of their places than of their country. What effect will the breaking off of the negotiation have upon us? Is the question that most of them put. Will it render us popular, or unpopular? Will it afford us an opportunity of getting a House of Commons still more to our mind? These are the questions that most of them have at their tongues' end. And, in such a state of things, what reason have we to expect, that we shall act as becomes a public-spirited and wise people? In opening negotiations for peace, the ministers perceived, that, if they concluded a peace such as alone they could expect to conclude under such circumstances, they would have to withstand all that the Pitt faction could say against it; and, they were well aware, that, in order to depreciate the peace, the embarrassed circumstances of the country would be overlooked, or denied; but, they had it in their power, at any time, to break off the negotiation, and thereby silence their opponents, though they could not promise themselves better terms at any future time. This was the view with which they opened the negotiation, and not with a resolution to do what was wise, whatever might be the consequences as to their places and their power. Such were the constantly-varying views of the place-loving Pitt. And, from the effect of such motives of action it is that this country

has sunk from one degree to another, till, at last, she dare not make peace; she dare not lay the sword out of her hand, for fear of being destroyed.

PARTIES.—Death, in levelling Mr. Fox, appears to me, to have levelled his party for ever. The whig club might well bewail the loss; for, in the same grave where his remains were deposited, was deposited all their consequence in this world. Indeed, the whigs were crippled the moment they came into power. They were blighted and blasted in the bud. Mr. Fox, I verily believe, took the seals of office with great reluctance. He saw in them, what they proved to be, not an emblem of power, but a badge of slavery. But, he was beset with a crew, who had so long hungered and thirsted for a share of the good things of Whitehall and St. James's, and, always as irresolute in adhering to the right path as he was acute in perceiving the errors of others, he, in an evil hour for his reputation and for his life, yielded to their selfish importunities. Had he rejected the degrading terms that were imposed upon him, had he said, I will have a Military Council, which I have contended to be necessary to the safety of the state; I will have a rigid inquiry into the expenditure of the public money, of which I have so frequently asserted there is such a scandalous waste; I will suffer no protection to be given to Indian or any other delinquency; I will have an investigation into the causes of that misery of the poor, of which I have so often complained; I will suffer no addition, at a time like this, to the pension and sinecure place lists, against the amount of which I have a hundred times inveighed; and, in short, I will insist upon reversing the whole of the corrupt system, which I have, upon so many occasions, represented as the cause of all our dangers and disgrace: if he had said, these things will I have, or I will have no place, he certainly would, at that time, have had no place; but, he would, in all human probability, have had life at this moment, and, what, to such a man, ought to be much dearer than life, he would, dead or alive, have had, with those who approved of his conduct theretofore, an untarnished reputation. In my mind, there is no doubt of his death having been occasioned by his constant application and by the torments of his mind. The same motives that led the crew, by whom he was beset, to urge him to accept of a place in the ministry, led them to keep him unremittingly at the oar. His habits of life as well as his habits of body required much

relaxation in order to preserve his health. The crew, intent only upon flattering themselves through his means, gave him not a moment's rest. But, though it is well known that they made the most of his short official existence; though they took care so to employ his power as to provide for themselves by places and emoluments; and though it is suspected that some of them have made ample provision by other means; yet, with respect to the whigs in general, they have killed the goose with the golden eggs. The reputation of the party was gone before his death, and with him went their power, leaving them the mere hangers-on of the ministry partly, and partly of the Prince of Wales.—The moment it was seen that Mr. Fox was not to be the prime minister, it was easy for any man acquainted with the state of parties, to foresee what would follow; but, when he himself condescended to become the instrument in bringing forward a law to enable Lord Grenville to hold two offices, incompatible with each other, "poor Fox, there only wanted the Windsor uniform to make the exhibition complete!" After this no part of his conduct could excite surprise. It was evident that he had made up his mind to go all lengths; and to have gone further than he did, in so short a space of time, seems almost impossible.—Yet, there was something in his name, that preserved his party from that utter contempt, into which, as it were at a signal given, they have now fallen. The Grenvilles know well, that the reputation of the whigs is gone; they know well that all the good and sensible men in the country, who were formerly proud to be thought whigs, have long been disgusted at the base abandonment of principle which their leaders have discovered; and they know also, that merely the name of Mr. Fox, and the high reputation of his talents, were all they had to dread in the way of rivalry for power. As to Mr. Grey, who has been a perfect mute ever since he came into power, they have little dread of him; the rest of the Foxites are scarcely worth naming; and, it is as clear as day-light, that, unless the whole of them will submit implicitly to Mr. Windham and Lord Grenville, they will soon be no longer in a situation to reap the fruits of their subserviency; and, indeed, if they be suffered to remain upon any condition, it is only owing to the Prince of Wales, who takes them, perhaps, under his protection, and whose life is, of course, likely to be longer than that of his father.—

If any proof, other than their conduct, were wanted, of the wretchedness of their situation, we have it in the elections for Westminster and Hampshire. Lord Percy was set up by the Grenvilles, who had just before, given him a borough; and, notwithstanding all that we have heard about other reasons, it is very well known now, that it was they who caused Mr. Sheridan to desist. Mr. Whitbread told the electors, that Lord Percy was the object of *the choice of the whigs*, just as Pitt, by *choice*, effaced the lillies from the arms of England. The whigs' was just such another choice; and do we not often see, in common life, that men, in order to disguise the disgrace of abject submission to the will of others, do that, apparently from their own inclination, which they know those others would compel them to do. In Hampshire, Lord Temple, in the name of his family, has set up two members; and here, too, the whigs are as diligent and as zealous as if the choice were their own. Lord Caernarvon, the father of Mr. Herbert, all the world knows, has long been closely attached to Lord Grenville. He was one of the few peers, who, much to his honour, voted with Lord Grenville against the ignominious peace of Amiens. The other member is also chosen by the Grenvilles, and it is well known that all his family and connections were opposed to the whigs in the county. Yet are the whigs labouring as hard now, for these two gentlemen, as they formerly were for Lord John Russell.—I would beg to be understood not as seeing with regret this disgrace, and approaching extinction, of the whigs. I have always thought, and I have always described, the greater part of the leaders amongst them, as ambitious and especially as selfish demagogues. The club, which they erected, always appeared to me to be intended to further their views as to places and pensions. It appeared impossible that such a Club should have any other rational object. There were no Tories for them to oppose. Why, then, was the wretched name of Whig kept alive by such a contrivance? "What need," said an old American to me once, "have you of those patriotic ferrets when all your rats are destroyed?" To which I answered: "But, if we have no need of the ferrets, the ferrets have great need of us, just as your Whig ferrets have need of you." They have their Whigs in America too, though there is not in the whole country, such a thing as a Tory. The fact is, that the Whigs, like the Anti-Jacobins, made

"a good thing" of their profession, and they are equally unwilling that it should cease to exist. Buonaparté, by destroying Jacobinism, has thrown hundreds of loyal writers out of work, and deprived their families of a comfortable subsistence. Is it surprising, that such men rail against him now even more than they did when he was a Jacobin himself?—I am well pleased at seeing this despicable rump of Whiggism broken up and exposed. It is, I hope, the last party Club that we shall ever hear of. The people will, I hope, learn to repose confidence in themselves, learn to act from their own judgment, and not again be the sport of a noisy selfish faction, who, with liberty and public good ever upon their lips, had, in their hearts, nothing but places and pensions and contracts and jobs.—As an instance of this place-hunting propensity, amongst the subaltern orders of the Whigs, we may select that of *Mr. Perry*, the proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*, a print, which under this gentleman's direction, was for twenty long years, the faithful repository of Whig sentiments and doctrines, and which, during the whole of that time, ceased not to inveigh against placemen and pensioners, and especially against my Lord Grenville and his family. This *Mr. Perry*, from the moment a change of ministry took place, began his applications for a post for himself; that is to say, for a share of those taxes of the unbearable weight of which he had a thousand times most bitterly complained. As to any services that he intends, or expects, to render the country, in consequence of his receiving this share of the taxes, that is a mere pretence or subterfuge. He is, I believe, one of those *new Commissioners of Accounts*, of which establishment so much was said last spring, and of which establishment I just recollect, that *Mr. Perry's* news-paper was a most strenuous advocate! Thus, by this appointment, have the Grenvilles, not only silenced a formidable Whig battery, but have converted it into a bastion for their own defence! And yet now, you shall I warrant you, hear this same *Morning Chronicle* railing against the tyrant of France "in good set terms," comparing the abject situation of his subjects with the freedom of Englishmen, who, amongst other blessings, enjoy the inestimable one of the *liberty of the press*! Well, poor *Perry*! he really deserves what he has got. It was several months before he could obtain any thing. A thousand votes were given, and discovered, and pointed out, in which they

might provide for him; and, at last, having found the Whigs full as grateful as they were public-spirited, he did in a fit of despair; it seems, throw himself at the feet of Lord Grenville, who, "under existing circumstances," thought it right to take compassion upon him. This self-degradation of *Mr. Perry* is, to me, really incomprehensible. As to public-spirit; as to disinterestedness; as to any of the self-denying public virtues, I could readily excuse the want of them in a professed Whig; but, I can neither excuse nor account for a man's voluntarily becoming a slave without any temptation, other than that of the love of a little brief and empty official importance. To do any thing abhorrent from one's feelings, to submit to the making of one single bow to a man that one hates, merely for the sake of being able to move about in a hutch drawn by a pair of horses, while one has two good legs to walk upon, is not easily to be excused; but, *Mr. Perry* has, of his own independent earnings, the means of gratifying every wish of this sort. What, then, in the name of sense and reason, could induce him to barter his freedom? to forfeit the power of freely expressing his thoughts? to give up, for the sake of a mite of despised importance, the first and greatest gift of heaven, the free use of the faculties of his mind? But, "his family," some one will say, "it was his duty to sacrifice his feelings for the good of his family." I do not believe that his family stood in need of any sacrifice of any kind; and, were he as poor as Job, and had he a wife like that of Job, his answer to her ought to be also like the answer of Job. Every thing that a man can do honestly and fairly and without degrading himself or neglecting his duty towards his country, he ought to do in order to make what he deems a suitable provision for his family. But, there is no obligation upon him to do, for this purpose, any act that has a tendency to degrade his own character. It is against nature as well as against reason to suppose, that his family ought to be exalted by the abasement of himself.—After all, however, I would not be understood, as imputing the self-degradation of *Mr. Perry* to any motive of the kind here alluded to. I am inclined to believe, that he was, from the first, a hunter after place, and that his undefatigable exertions, his unparalleled fortitude through a six months series of rebuffs, are fairly and solely ascribable to that ardent love of the taxes, which is the ruling passion of every true Whig.




“**DELICATE INVESTIGATION.**”——The public have been so long amused with promises that a report of this investigation was about to be made, that, after we were told of the preparation of it by *two barristers*, many persons, in the simplicity of their hearts, believed that it was actually forthcoming. My readers will, however, do me the justice to remember, that I never gave into any such belief; for, in the first place I never could think, that any one had so very low an opinion of the understanding of the people of this country, as to suppose that they would not laugh at the idea of setting two barristers to work to *prepere* (that is to say *garble*), for publication, a report drawn up by three privy counsellors; and, in the next place, I could not believe, that, supposing the people of England to be thought so despicably credulous as to give credit to a report so prepared; supposing them to be regarded in this despicable light, I could not believe that the Princess of Wales would ever give her consent to the publication of a report so garbled. For this reason it was, that I ventured to deny the fact of garbling; I stated my suspicion that the story of the two barristers was a sheer fabrication of the writer in the *Morning Post*, having in view no other object than that of making some of his well-dressed rabble of readers believe, that he was in the secrets of the Princess of Wales, a suspicion, which, by a paragraph in the same paper, of the 14th instant, is fully confirmed.——“We repeat,” says he, “that two of the most distinguished of His Majesty’s counsel have made that preparation; and that the publication at this moment waits for nothing but his Majesty’s sanction. This writer himself no longer dares to insinuate a doubt of the complete acquittal and established innocence of the illustrious object of the Infamous Calamny. It is *universally known*. It is possible that in this publicity of the purity of the illustrious Princess, his Majesty, *thinking the publication not absolutely necessary to her justification, may withhold it from tenderness to many persons, some of them, we understand, of very high rank, whose share in the business would cause them to be regarded with very different sensations and sentiments from the high veneration and affectionate and loyal attachment universally felt for the Princess of Wales*. We still hope his Majesty will not think it necessary to restrain the publication. We should hope that nothing has been done that can render it difficult to do the fullest justice to exalted innocence, without bringing into question the con-

duct of persons whom, from a variety of considerations, we are anxious to have regarded with respect and admiration.”

——The public were somewhat prepared for this by a paragraph of the day before, in which from the facts real or invented, of the Princess having employed herself in making toys to be sold at *Leatherhead* fair for the benefit of the poor, and from her having said to the surgeon, who came to attend her after the overturning of her coach, “Go and take care of poor Miss Cholmondeley;” from these facts, real or invented, was drawn, by a chain of most ingenious arguments, a conclusion, that there *now* required *no further proof* of the falsehood of everything, that had been alledged against this amiable and illustrious stranger, before the privy council.” I must confess, that I was sorry to see such reasoning resorted to, and the turn of my mind was, I am afraid, rather towards laughter than conviction. It was, too, with no greater degree of satisfaction, that I heard in the same paragraph, that the death of the Princess’s brother, and the departure of her father for the wars, were circumstances calculated to convince us of the impropriety of asking for any further elucidation of the affair that has so long been agitated; for, however laudable it might be to call upon us to sympathize with her as to the events just mentioned, I could not, in spite of all my efforts, perceive how those events, or any thing connected with them, could possibly affect our judgment as to the facts relating to the “*Delicate Investigation.*” In short, I suspected what was the next day confirmed, that some new pretence was coming out for not making any publication at all, whether in whole or in garble, of the much talked of report.——Was ever a set of readers so insulted as those which handle the foul columns from which the above extract is made? *First*, they were informed, that accusations, amounting to a charge of high treason, had been preferred against the Princess of Wales, and that an examination of the witnesses was then going on before a select committee of the privy council: *Secondly*, they were assured, that the accusation was totally groundless, that it had arisen from instigation and subornation in a high quarter: *Thirdly*, they were informed, that the Princess of Wales had resolved to have her reputation cleared in the eyes of the world by insisting upon a publication of the whole of the report and evidence whenever the investigation should be completed: *Fourthly*, they were told, that the investigation was completed, and that the utmost that was found to be proved were a few trifling

levities, such as every married woman in England was occasionally liable to: *Fifthly*, they were told, that the Princess of Wales, had received a report, and they, of course, expected that she would cause it to be published forthwith, especially when they recollected, that the same writer had told them, that the English nation had a deep interest in the Princess's reputation, and that nothing ought to satisfy them but a full and unreserved publication of the whole of the report and the whole of the evidence: *Sixthly*, they were informed, that, the report, (a report drawn up by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Grenville, and Lord Spencer), being too gross for publication at full length, two barristers (delicate persons) had been set to work to make it fit to meet the public eye: and, *Seventhly*, they are told, that, the two barristers having finished this famous work of preparation, it has been laid before his Majesty, and that his Majesty, well knowing that there is no necessity at all for any further proof of the purity of the Princess, may possibly, restrain the publication, lest it should expose to public hatred some of the accusers or their instigators!—There is no necessity of saying any more, I think. That head must be empty indeed, wherein a pretty correct judgment upon all this will not without a moment's hesitation be formed.

 In the subsequent pages of this Number will be found *seven* letters, every one of them upon interesting subjects, and generally speaking, written with a degree of ability, which is rarely met with in any publication, whether periodical or not. All, except one, of the writers are entirely unknown to me; and, though I cannot but know, that I afford them a gratification by communicating their writings to the public, I must not, at the same time, omit to make them my acknowledgments, as one of that public, for the advantage which I hope to be able to derive from their labours. The applause which has been occasionally bestowed on me for my *candour* in admitting communications in opposition to my own sentiments and statements, is certainly too great; for had I no other object in view than that of mere pecuniary interest, that alone would recommend such admission; but, fond as I am, like all other writers, of making converts to my opinions, I am, I hope, still fonder of truth. The fact is, that my impartiality, in the practice referred to, attracts commendation from its novelty rather than from its positive merit, upon the same principle, that amongst a regiment of drunkards, a single sober man becomes an object of praise.—*Botley, October 16th.*

MR. FOX AND PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

SIR,—Mr. Fox is no more. Our country hath lost a man by whom a large space in the public mind was occupied. After a tedious exclusion of this statesman from office, short has been his possession of power! Great were our hopes when he was lately called to the helm, because during a twenty years proscription he seemed to be collecting in his bosom the gathered wisdom of ages; to be employed in ballasting the lofty sails of his genius with political science; and tempering the fire of his passions with moral rectitude. But now, ere we have tasted the fruits of his recent ministry, the hand of Providence, alas! hath snatched him from us. Scarcely had opened upon us a prospect, through his means, of recovering from the calamities brought on our country by a system of misgovernment, the pernicious nature of which cannot be too frequently the object of our scrutiny, ere that all-cheering prospect has again vanished. Under these circumstances what thoughtful man can avoid meditating on our public situation; or considering how it may be affected by the loss we have experienced.

Although, Sir, Mr. Fox be no more, the *Borough system*; foul parent of all ill, remains; the national debt still exists, an eighth part of our population is in a state of pauperism, war and increasing taxation are adding to our calamities, and the comet Napoleon still moves in his orbit, the dread of nations. Had the Fox ministry given any proofs of having discerned, that *something more* is wanting to the preservation and the well governing of our country, than the mere balancing of parties, and the packing of parliaments? To what eye were discoverable, on the formation of that ministry, the slightest traces of a better system than that which had proved our bane? Commissions, under pretence of cleansing away *official* filth, are nothing new: They belonged to the very system of which we complain. Meanly, and ignorantly indeed, must ministers have thought of the public taste, and public wants, to have imagined that thus to serve up the stinking orts of a North and a Burke, a Melville and a Pitt, newly hashed and heated, could either impose or satisfy. It remains, then, to demand of those satellites of the patriot of St Anne's Hill, whose high reputation was their principal stock in trade, what was the worth of that whiggism which is ever in their mouths, what the value of *the friendship they professed*, when, by their harrassing importunities, they prevailed upon the great statesman on whom they fawned, in a second instance to make

shipwreck of his reputation, by unconditionally coalescing with men of principles inveterately hostile to freedom, and who had shared in the worst counsels of a Pitt? Had the error been originally his own, had they discovered him about to leap, infatuated, the fatal precipice, ought they not to have interposed between such a friend and such a danger? Ought they not, at the hazard of life itself, to have snatched him from destruction? He who could refuse nothing to the friends of his bosom, was not a man to have been lost, had those who possessed his confidence been truly worthy of his friendship!

When, towards the close of the American war, (at which time we had not suffered under Lord North a tithe of the evil flowing from the *Borough system*, and the faction behind the throne, that we afterwards suffered from the same impure sources under Mr. Pitt) the Rockingham ministry was formed, we recollect that stipulations and conditions were the bond of their union, and the pledge of their future performances: but what stipulations, what conditions, what pledge accompanied the formation of the Fox ministry?

The stipulations on the former occasion were, "the independence of America; the Contractors bill; the Revenue Officers bill; Mr. Burke's bill, the great parts of it; general peace, if to be had; and the discussion in parliament of the subject of a parliamentary reform." * All these objects, except the "PARLIAMENTARY REFORM" were shortly obtained. Peace was become the interest of the court and of ministers, and therefore we were not long without it. Some correction of official abuses was a convenient stalking horse, and therefore a parade was made of it. But that internal object, in comparison of which all the rest were insignificant, that reform which alone had in it any thing truly beneficial, or which could keep the offices pure, was only made the subject of a farce, until the principal performer, Mr. Pitt, got securely seated in power; after which, in due time it came to pass, that to continue to be a parliamentary reformer became, in the eyes of this same Mr. Pitt, a heinous crime; and an heresy so damnable, as to justify for its extirpation imprisonments, persecutions, and martyrdom. *Who, Mr. Cobbett, during those black days of wickedness and terror, were the cabinet colleagues of Mr. Pitt?* Without an avowed renunciation of an abominable creed, a manifest contrition for criminal conduct, and a solemn pledge for acting

in future on truly constitutional principles could it be right, could it be wise, could it be any thing but perdition, for such a man, and a man so circumstanced, as Mr. Fox, to coalesce with such men? We saw, indeed, the coalition; but we have not seen the pledge. For the reputation of him whom we have lost, for the honour of human nature, let us hope it exists.

It were easy, Mr. Cobbett, to trace the miscarriages of our continental coalitions against the compact and well directed power of France, to the inherent defects in the respective governments of which the alliance was composed; not excepting our own. When neither English nor Austrians could believe the army of Napoleon to exist in any formidable shape, as a dragon it descended from the cloudy summit of Mount St. Bernard, to strike a blow that led to the subjugation of Europe. Last year again, while these coalesced governments were, as they vainly imagined, planting their clumsy toils around their devoted prey, his armies, like a Vesuvian torrent, swept from its base the German empire.

To cure the debility of our allies is not in our power. *Despotism of constitution* being their disease, they must cure themselves, or abide the issue. But what hinders the cure of our own malady, the *Borough Phrenzy*? All putrid within, and all blotches without, like true maniacs, we boast of our soundness and beauty. Having caught from the Continent a despotic taint, which has well nigh brought the state to its grave through very weakness, we think not of shaking off our distemper, as the rational means of recovering our strength. Without freedom, we trust in gold; and while France has acquired the dominion of the Continent, we have increased our debt until the rental of our whole island will not pay the interest. When Mr. Pitt with great solemnity "searched the sore," he also affected to prescribe "the medicine," but having once got the patient consigned to his keeping, he, like others of the trade, made it then his study, for his own gain, that is, for the gratification of a lust of power, to aggravate and to perpetuate the disease.

When Mr. Pitt's death, and Lord Hawkesbury's inability to hold the reins of government, turned the royal eye upon the leaders of opposition, amongst whom there were those who had said so much, and had so irresistibly argued, on the necessity of a parliamentary reformation, why heard we not publicly from the lips of the party a syllable on the subject? Why heard we of no stipulations and conditions in favour of the at-

* Wyvill's Political Papers, v. III. p. 355.

tempt? Had official abuse, or parliamentary corruption decreased, since the days of Lord Rockingham? Had the House of Commons improved in its vigilance and fidelity in protecting our *property*; had it guarded us with more political virtue from the increase of a standing army, or the infamy of being everywhere surrounded with barracks? Or was the Faction behind the Throne now grown so potent, that even to hint at parliamentary reformation, was the sin which could have no forgiveness, and an irreversible disqualification for office?

From this unaccountable silence, especially on the part of Mr. Fox, must we not infer, that the bodily complaint to which he so soon after fell a sacrifice, had even then sapped the energies of his mind? Every real patriot anxiously wished for his elevation to power, because he was considered as solemnly pledged to the effecting of such reform, as the sole condition of his consenting to be of the cabinet; because it was imagined to be the settled conviction of his superior understanding, that, without such reform, his being a minister would be of no use; for he knew that, without a vital and substantial representation, the English constitution can have no existence, the nation no political liberty, the people no security that their whole estates shall not be transferred to the Exchequer, and themselves transformed into villani, or boors, for their cultivation. Not even from the sordid counsels of unworthy friends does it seem possible, Sir, to account for the conduct on that occasion of the experienced statesman and patriot of St. Anne's Hill, unless we at the same time admit that the approach of his dissolution had already distempered the once acute sight of his mind, laying him open to the influence of men every way his inferiors. From the distinguished painter now at the head of the historic branch in the English school, the writer once heard an anecdote of a very eminent Italian artist, which may illustrate his present supposition. This Italian was a painter of landscapes. In every department of his art he eminently excelled; but in the truth and brilliancy of his colouring he was unrivalled. In time, his health declined, and his eye, without his own consciousness, materially partook of his disease. By reason of improved genius his compositions became more exquisite; by experience and study, his judgment more correct; and he painted nature exactly as nature appeared to him. But when his fame, instead of continuing on the increase, materially sunk in estimation, he was surprised and mortified. He painted

on, still, as he thought, improving. Every picture was inferior to the preceding; but yet, in nothing except the colouring. That scenery which, had it been painted while he had a healthy eye, would have glowed on his canvas vivid and gay, brilliant and expressive of a regenerating animation, came from his morbid pencil the representation of nature apparently dead, the gloomy prelude to a dissolution of all things.

Might it not, in respect of political prospects, have been thus with Mr. Fox after his fatal distemper had diffused itself through his frame? Might he not, through a mere decay of mental vision, have believed our state to have lost its freedom beyond recovery? Or, through a lost consciousness of what is achievable by talent and energy, have felt himself no longer a reforming Hercules? And what he, (no more aware than the painter of the true cause of a change in his powers) despaired of being able to effect, might he not think impracticable to any other man? An undoubted truth it now appears to be, that when he became minister he was in fact, rapidly hastening to the condition of a dying man; and, indeed, we may in a manner say, that his sovereign's cabinet served to him only as an antichamber to the hall of death.

But even in his highest health, perhaps this eminent person was of a nature to stand in need of more firmness than he possessed, when his duties had in them aught of a necessary sternness, or stoical severity. In the composition of his greatness, there was perhaps one imperfection, peculiarly unfavourable to the deep-searchings of that political reform in our government which is become necessary. Like a Sampson, his general strength seems to have had the accompaniment of one defeating weakness; or, like an irresistible Achilles, he appears to have been in one point vulnerable. If, Sir, his virtue wanted that character, of a requisite inexorableness by which corruption can only be subdued; and by which assailants, in the shape of personal friends, are to be resisted; or that eye of command, and majesty of tone, by which the proudest and the highest are to be controlled; if he wanted that absolute inflexibility on essential points, which no power on earth can bend, no influence under heaven can warp from the straight line of rectitude, his virtue might have been of a species to have shone with lustre in a happier period; but in a crisis of awful revolutions, when kingdoms and empires are daily perishing or bursting into life; and when our own state is sickening of an internal disease that must shortly terminate in death un-

less she recover her constitution; or, in other words, a real representation of the people in that assembly which imposes the taxes, and which ought to hold a tight controul over the actions of ministers; if, I say, he possessed not an adamant mind equal to such a crisis, his virtue, illustrious as it might be, was assuredly deficient. Whether such defect, if real, is to be imputed to the mind-eneebing effect of declining health, or to an amiable weakness of soul, let those, who have been longest and best acquainted with the present subject of our thoughts decide. He has been accounted a man beloved by all who approached him, for a frank and generous nature, as well as for a temper peculiarly benignant, the very reverse of austere. But austerity, although in the social circle a blemish, will, in a statesman at a period of corruption, be a merit of high account; especially when called upon as the acknowledged leader of a powerful party, to preside at the helm in a tempest, while the decay of the vessel, the licentiousness of the officers, and the ill treatment of the crew, have shewn the internal, to exceed the external danger of the voyage. Unless austerity were a feature in the character of a statesman so circumstanced, could he refuse offices of honour and emolument, to those who had no other claim than having paid him personal attentions, and assiduously sought to oblige him? Without considerable sternness, could he beat down and disappoint the unwarrantable expectations of selfish associates? Could he, on mere grounds of public duty, by resisting the improper requests of beloved friends, make known to them his opinion of their unfitness for what they asked? Or, without these virtues of austerity and sternness, would it be possible for him, equally regardless of the proud partisan, or the insinuating sycophant, to dispose of public offices on the sole ground of merit, and under the strict discipline of incurring a loss of a place by the neglect of a duty?

But, Sir, to come to something like a practical notion respecting this firmness and inflexibility, this sternness and austerity, this moral rectitude and public virtue, which I consider as necessary in a presiding English minister at this awful æra of the rise and fall of nations, I must ask this question;—when the respected and admired statesman of St. Anne's Hill was solicited to quit his retirement for the helm of state, were we not intitled to expect that he would have delivered himself to some such effect as the following; namely, "Without a radical reformation which shall not only put an end to factious combinations for power, but extinguish

senatorial venality; a reformation which, by purifying our elections, our offices, and parliament, shall generally correct the tendencies to corruption, arrest the decay of morals, beget disinterestedness, revive liberty, diffuse a martial spirit, disseminate political virtue, and elevate the public mind, no minister can now substantially benefit his country; nor, without an unalterable determination to attempt the achievement, can any man become a minister, but to the certain ruin of his reputation. My determination is made and shall be adhered to. I must either remain a private person, or be a reforming minister. Not a reformer after the manner of Lord North or Mr. Pitt, of Mr. Burke or Lord Melville, whose commissions of audit and of accounts, whose bills for economy and official correction, have seemed but the seed beds of a wilder extravagance, or signals for abuses more inveterate, and speculation more enormous than any before. Nay, further: before I listen to the present invitation, I must be satisfied that all my proposed colleagues will heartily concur in such a system of reform; and even then, I must not, I cannot, set foot in the King's cabinet, until his Majesty shall have been graciously pleased to assure me, that this work of reformation shall have his declared, his open, his firm, his steady support; and until he shall moreover have authorised me to make known to his servants of every rank and description, that his approbation and favour can only be retained by their respectively concurring to the utmost of their power in a work so essential to the preservation of the state, as well as to the improvement, the prosperity, and the happiness of his people. Without disrespecting an observance of the outward forms and ceremonies of religion, we know they do not always insure to us inward goodness, which is the parent of right conduct. So, those who go regularly to church, and make many prayers, and yet actively oppose, and acrimoniously encounter parliamentary reformation, which the constitution of our country, honesty, justice, the public good, and true piety, all require; while at the same time they promote and uphold the Borough-system, which is a compound of the greatest folly and the greatest vices, and the chief cause of all our evils; such persons I say, are either pitifully weak and horribly wicked; either unhappy dupes, objects of our compassion, or odious impostors, meriting our

“ deepest detestation. Well knowing that
 “ ministers so authorised and so supported
 “ as I should require to be, must have in
 “ their hands the ready means of restoring
 “ to the nation its most precious inheri-
 “ tance, and the vital principle of its free-
 “ dom, of which, to its dishonour and un-
 “ speakable injury, it has been robbed by
 “ men whom accident has made a pernicious
 “ faction; and in utter contempt of
 “ what that faction could devise to save it-
 “ self from extinction; I should be most
 “ happy, on the terms I have stated to you,
 “ to be an instrument in the hands of my
 “ sovereign for conferring on his people the
 “ greatest of all earthly blessings, and should
 “ account myself one of the most fortunate
 “ of mankind, in labouring to such an end
 “ in conjunction with the wisest and best
 “ men of the age.”

Had such, Mr. Cobbett, been the conduct of their illustrious leader, exciting the reverence, and insuring the imitation of an Erskine, a Howick, and a Sheridan, who of their comperes, at the period to which I allude, let me ask, would have been bold enough to have deserted such men standing on such ground for the lust of place, and for governing again by a bought majority of a Borough parliament! If such conduct could have failed to have made reformers of the whole party, statesmen of all the human species must be the most depraved. From such a conduct, might we not have expected one of these two results? Either Mr. Fox, at the head of a ministry saving his country, impressing into it a new soul, and enabling it gloriously to make a peace, that even France itself should not dare to violate; or, Mr. Fox in retirement adored for his virtue, revered for his wisdom, and possessed of the undivided affection and gratitude of the nation; in short, idolized throughout the land. His early death would then have been a political canonization; ranking him with the Solons and the Alfreds of immortal name; and rendering his praise a never-dying theme of glowing patriotism. Over his urn the present generation would not have ceased to shed their tears; and from his ashes their sons, contemplating his god-like example, would have received into their bosoms those manly virtues which are the preservatives of liberty, the health, and the grandeur of nations.

If Mr. Fox, either mentally enfeebled by his incipient disease, or through an erroneous idea of *expediency*—a counsellor of most doubtful character, and a near relation of “*the fiend* DISCRETION” lost a golden

* Sir William Jones.

opportunity of doing incalculable good, it must by no means be inferred that it was not his intention at a future day to have attempted the reform of which I have spoken. Nay, it would greatly injure his character to doubt such an intention; and it is here declared, that, from his own lips, after he was minister, the writer received assurance that, “ IN RESPECT OF THE NECESSITY OF A RE-
 “ FORM IN PARLIAMENT, HIS FORMERLY-
 “ DECLARED OPINION WAS IN NO DEGREE
 “ CHANGED.” I cannot, Sir, conclude these observations without earnestly warning every honest statesman against becoming a patriotic lingerer; lest, hazarding his country's welfare and his own fame, he be overtaken by inexorable death.—ALURED.—
 Oct. 11, 1806.

NATIONAL DEBT AND SINKING FUND. LETTER I.

SIR;—From your answer to Decius in the Register of the 27th ult. I clearly perceive you stand in need of no aid to convince those who will be convinced, that a national bankruptcy and the salvation of the country are but different terms for the same thing. But as your generous wish to encourage reflection and enquiry led you to permit my humble efforts on the subjects of the Sinking Fund and Tranquillity Institution to appear in the ranks of the many able productions which will record the fame of the Political Register so long as principles are valuable, I hope that the same motives which first induced you to encourage my vanity, (when compared with the sense of others) will now incline you to permit me, through the medium of the Register, to relieve my mind of the chain of thoughts which the most sacred regard to truth, and the study of years, have enabled me to form on the subjects of my title; and to record such observations on the principles of Decius, as I think will, if not acquit us of guilt, at any rate, defy our accusers to substantiate against us, the crime of the revolutionary views with which they charge us, unless it be a crime to revolve from bad to better. Alluding to the fortunate case of an individual who can pay off his debt without diminishing his income, (a rare case indeed), Decius observes “not so would it be” with the nation “if you suppose” (mind this is but a supposition) “that it is partly
 “ from these same creditors, and by means
 “ of the sources of supply which would be
 “ thus” (by ceasing to pay the interest of the debt) “cut off, that the debtor derived,
 “ either directly or indirectly, through the
 “ medium of others, his means of exist-

“ence. If you cease to supply them (the
 “creditors) with that income (the interest
 “of the debt) which served them as a
 “source of subsistence, you not only extin-
 “guish the supply in the way of taxes,
 “(that is, put it out of their power to con-
 “tribute towards the exigencies of the
 “state) but also extinguish, at the same
 “time, all those sources of supply which
 “by its distribution, (re-circulation) the
 “money they received served to give birth
 “to.” That is, in short, if their annuities
 be stopt, the national creditors will not only
 be deprived of food and raiment, and the
 ability to pay taxes, but debtors themselves,
 who subsist in whole or in part on the mo-
 ney spent by the creditors, must altogether,
 or as many of them as live upon the 30 mil-
 lions a year distributed by the creditors and
 on their account, lye down and starve!!!
 O, horrid, horrid, Mr. Cobbett, what a
 d—l you must be to what Decius is!
 Thirty millions a year, Sir, no doubt main-
 tain 600,000 *individuals* independent of
 labour, nay, the creditors amount to that
 themselves, exclusive of their brokers, job-
 bers, bankers, butlers, valets, cooks, confec-
 tioners, and all those into whom the touch
 of their money breathes the breath of life;
 and you would starve them all for the good
 of your country and king; and that too, at
 a time when 6,000,000 are waiting to curb
 the ambition of Buonaparté, and secure
 the commerce of the world. Do you think,
 Sir, your king and country are idiots, or,
 do you want a strait waistcoat? If Decius’s
 argument be not carried this far, I know
 not where to stop and attach a value to it.
 But, as he hears of no particular aggravation
 of sufferings, for want of a national debt,
 in those countries where the supply is risen
 within the year, and the ambition of go-
 vernment is limited by its power, or, where,
 to borrowing their money and drafting
 soldiers and sailors from the ranks of the in-
 dustrious debtors, governments prefer im-
 pressing the idle creditors into the public
 service, he may, himself, upon a re-consider-
 ation of his principles, think his argu-
 ment of no value. Indeed its value is alto-
 gether founded upon a supposition, name-
 ly, in substance, that money creates supplies,
 and that the supplies which money creates,
 feed and clothe, &c. the individuals who
 touch it in its round from one party to the
 other. The truth of this supposition, how-
 ever, hangs upon the solution of a single
 question, namely, does money create or give
 birth either to a supply, or, the source of a
 supply? The question is equivocal. So

far as the use of money saves to the farmers
 and mechanics, who create the supply, the
 time or labour which they would lose were
 they to barter the produce of their labour,
 that far, and no farther, can money increase
 the produce of labour, which is the supply.
 But as the thing which saves time to do
 another thing, cannot be the thing saved,
 and as the thing saved, in this case, is, the
 labour required to create the supply, it
 follows on every principle of cause and ef-
 fect, that labour is the thing, and the only
 thing, that creates the supply. 1. This
 being the law of nature in the case; 2. As
 the money received and distributed by the
 national creditors renders themselves, and
 all who touch it, independent of agricultu-
 ral and mechanical labour, the labouring
 farmers and mechanics excepted; 3. As,
 be the state of the dexterity, skill, and
 judgment with which labour is applied,
 what it may, the abundance or scantiness
 of the annual supply, during the continua-
 nce of that state, must, upon the propor-
 tion between the number of those who are
 annually employed in agricultural and me-
 chanical labour, and that of those who are
 not so employed; and, 4. As the number
 of creditors stands upon the records of the
 bank and tax office at 600,000, exclusive
 of the tail which grows out of it, of paper
 money, coiners, accountants, bankers, bro-
 kers, &c. &c. and of the military esta-
 blishments which are annually supported by
 the annual loans, in independence of pro-
 ductive labour, nothing can be required to
 convince Decius himself that the distribu-
 tion of their money, instead of having a
 beneficial effect, is of the most calamitous
 consequences to the supply, and all that
 depends upon its abundance, but to admit
 that labour and *not* money is the thing which
 creates or gives birth to the supply. If he
 admits this, my reasoning is, what is vul-
 garly called a knock-me-down argument.
 But as knock-me-downs of all kinds have a
 greater tendency to stupify the senses than
 to enlighten the mind, I will, from respect
 for the sagacity of Decius in having made
 the effect upon the supply the measure of
 value on his own policy and ours, of con-
 tinuing to pay, or, ceasing to pay, the in-
 terest of the national debt, try what his a-
 gument is worth, on a principle or two
 more, as, on that chosen by him, it is
 worse than nothing, if I be correct as to the
 extent the use or distribution of money in-
 creases the supply; for the whole of my ar-
 gument hangs upon that question. Conse-
 quently, if it be answered in the nega-

the conclusions I draw from it falls to the ground, but if not, they are established. And then it must appear to Decius himself, that, to cease to pay the interest of the national debt, is, of two evils, the least. Provided, first, that the length to which the cessation is carried does not create poors rate; for to amount of such rate, though the debt may be discharged its pressure is not removed; and, secondly, that as many of the stockholders as cannot subsist upon their unfunded property, and are able to labour, be converted into farmers and mechanics, and that land and materials are given them to work upon; for to the amount of their labour the supply will be increased; and therefore the hands that create their supply will be set at liberty to defend their country. Will Decius venture to point out the means by which the country can be otherwise saved? And if he will not, of what utility is the sinking fund? The very object of which is to maintain that kind of faith and honour with the creditors, which is intended to keep them as independent of useful labour, in their capacity of money-holders, as they are above it in that of stockholders; and the very effect of which, is, to withhold from the public service, the hands or labour required to create its annual amount.—But, to return to the principles on which I mean to try the value of Decius's argument. I. Creditors, Sir, who perform no part of the labour that creates the supply, and pay them interest, are to the industrious debtors whose labour creates the one and pays the other, what paupers are to the community that supports them. Paupers standing in this relation to the community, diminish the supply, and mark it, in the first instance, to the amount of their own labour, and, in the second, to that of their waste and consumption, which is great in proportion as they are rich; yet, such is the real or wilful incapacity of the creditors or paupers of this description, that they can see no political evil in their own idleness, waste, and consumption. But were we, who see that one character of idlers, as well as another diminish the supply, to propose the introduction of foreign troops to the number of our idle creditors, and to convert them into useful labourers, we should be deemed the friends of the country sending them, and not of our own. Yet so far as an increase of the supply and of the means of national security can prove patriotism, we are our country's best friends, for the introduction of such troops would produce that effect. For instance, our

debtors and creditors are 100 each, in number. In this case, every debtor has a creditor to maintain besides himself, and a cent. per cent. of the supply is lost with all its consequent advantages; but, making both debtors, and introducing 100 foreign troops as creditors, every debtor has but half a creditor to support besides himself. In this case an addition of 50 per cent. is made to the supply, while 100 men are added to our military defenders. On this view of the case, therefore, (and can there be a doubt of its application to our case?) Decius is not more fortunate than he was on the former. Taking the increase of our supply and military defenders as the proof, can a doubt remain, if there were no other remedy to the evil, that those who would introduce foreign troops to the amount of our national creditors, and, convert them, with their tail of bankers, &c., as above stated, are the friends of their own country, and not of that which would make us a present of such troops, and saddle itself with such a loss to the amount of their labour? and, therefore, that those who would not, are the enemies of their country? Taking this as the proof, can a doubt remain that those who calumniate us, as traitors, because we would cease to pay the interest of the national debt, and pass themselves upon the swinish multitude as patriots, men of honour, justice, and feeling, because they would continue to pay it, have no desire to share in the labour which must support the independence of their country. Nay, our black and white appear more distinct to the eye, than it is clear to the understanding, that they mean nothing by the independence of their country, but their own independence of the labour which must support the independence of their country? And, that they mean, by the stake they have in the country, nothing but the number of labourers from whom they extort their maintenance? And clear in all this, and taking the 900,000 paupers, which their independence of labour has created since the revolution of 1688, as throwing a greater light upon the subject, can a doubt remain, that they view the labourers, not as they are, the basis of the state and human beings, but, just as the patriots of Liverpool consider their fellow creatures of the African race, namely, as mere beasts of prey? For the preservation of which, they would hurl Buonaparté from his throne, sweep the sea, and stalk triumphant over the globe, and, not for equal justice and equal laws in practice as well as profession. Better first prin-

ciples may not be practicable; it may be that we are created to prey upon each other, and the swinish multitude may remain insensible to the havoc that is made of policy, justice, and feeling, by ignorance and design, under the mask of necessity, but, can any man, who views the salvation of his country through any other medium than his own desire to live independent of labour, deny, that the time will come, when the evil of converting useful labourers into idlers, be their character civil, military, or any other, will cure itself; and that too, in a more disastrous manner, than if the gentle hand of the law were to convert them into useful labourers, and furnish them with the materials to work upon. And when it is considered, that the idle part of the population of England and Wales, already amounts to 7,180,082, and the industrious but to 2,180,469,* a limit to the progressive increase of idlers, *which is the national debt*, seems to be nearly fixed, or the time appears not to be far distant, when they must become, in their turn, a prey to the labourers, or each other. — C. S. — Sept. 6, 1806.

ON CEASING TO PAY INTEREST UPON THE NATIONAL DEBT.

DECIUS'S LETTER II.

(See the first Letter in page 463 of this volume, and my answer to it in page 484.)

SIR,—I have read, with great satisfaction, the observations you have made on the letter which I addressed to you on the subject of the National Debt. If the effect of what I have written be merely to have put the subject in a right train, and to have drawn forth the arguments that have fallen from you, I shall consider my time as not having been ill bestowed. On a question, for the coming to any correct opinion upon which, it is so impossible that any sufficient data should be obtained, and on which, therefore, we must be content with such approximations to truth as can be deduced from general reasoning, it is scarcely possible, that having set out with persuasions so greatly discordant, we should ever arrive at any exact coincidence of opinion. But as there appears every desire on your part to set

the subject in its true point of view, and as it is one in which there must be so decided a right and wrong, I think it not probable, that we shall ultimately find our opinions so irreconcilable as you appear to suppose they must be.—The question between us is now reduced to a mere question of *quantity*: viz the quantity of suffering, in all shapes, that would be occasioned by the transfer of this species of property from hand to hand. I now propose, in the way of answer to your arguments, to state such additional circumstances as your observations and subsequent reflection have suggested to me on the subject, as lead me to conclude, that, independently of the alarm and moral suffering that would be occasioned by carrying into effect the measure proposed, the nation, in a *pecuniary* point of view, would derive very little benefit from it: meaning, that if the National Debt were now to be annihilated, little, if any, deduction could be made from the amount of the taxes that are now collected.—I will beg, however, first, again to advert to the sort of temper in which the discussions on this subject had hitherto been conducted. You observe there has been no “*personal abuse*.” I admit there has been none. But it is for this very reason, because the abuse is *not* personal, that I complain of the introduction of it. Had it been personal, and fixed upon some determinate class of individuals, by some more precisely designating denominations than that of “*blood sucker*,” “*muck-worm*,” and so forth, every man would have been enabled to judge for himself, how far the persons aimed at, were really deserving of the opprobrium intended to be cast upon them, and they might thus, if public opinion be not considered as altogether impotent, have been, if not altogether expelled from society, yet at least, by being marked out, their capacity for doing mischief would have been diminished. As it is, all that we understand is, that there are some men, properly called “*muck-worms*,” who *are* the objects of *particular*, and *ought to be* the objects of *general* indignation: but *who* these men, these “*muck-worms*” are, is not altogether so clear. What however is certain is, that to whatever species of dealings the existence of the National Debt has given rise, there are none, the engaging in which, is not perfectly optional on the part of the parties concerned in them: there is no power to compel any man to buy or sell stock, any more than there is to buy or sell any other com-

* For the data of this most important of all political calculations, see my Letter to Mr. Fox, in the Political Register of the 23d of August, page 200.

modity that is the object of sale: if he does buy or sell it, he does it, because he thinks it will be for his advantage, or otherwise for his convenience. It is not merely this species of property that is liable to abuse; it has this defect in common with all other property in whatever shape it may exist. But because there are depredators of all sorts who prey upon individuals possessing property, because there are housebreakers, footpads, cheats, and so forth, this can be no reason for abolishing all distinction of property, and reducing things to that state of innocent primitive simplicity, which some persons are so much charmed with the idea of. While separate ownership continues to exist, and while that intercourse is carried on between men which seems necessary to the existence of all society, in any degree civilised, some men, unless we impose the most minute and vexatious restraints upon general free agency, will ever be exposed to become a prey to the knavery and roguery of others.—Having premised thus much, I will now proceed to the separate consideration of the arguments in the order in which you have placed them; in the course of which, I will endeavour, as much as possible, to avoid the statement of any opinion to which a sufficient answer may be found, in what you have already said; but, at the same time, claiming all the indulgence that the discussion of a subject of such acknowledged intricacy and difficulty may be thought to require, and especially from the having to contend against the opinion of so formidable, though, at the same time, in general, so candid an opponent.—I. I have to thank you for conducting me out of some absurdities, to which, perhaps, my expressions might bear to be tortured into: but, *en revanche*, you have plunged me into others, which are perfectly foreign to any conceptions I ever entertained on the subject, and which a fair construction of my expressions, will not, I believe, upon examination, be found to justify. I am very far from meaning to say that it is in itself a matter of indifference, what quantity of money is raised upon the people in the way of taxes, merely because it is re-circulated among the persons from whom it has been levied. This is a position, evidently so mistaken, that I should scarcely have expected from the general tenor of your arguments, to find attributed to me. So far from this being my opinion of what would be the case, I have stated it as being perfectly undeniable, and all my arguments on the subject are grounded expressly upon the assumption, that in all transfer of property from hand to hand, there is an absolute loss;

and from this cause it is, that so great a defalcation would come to be made from the benefit that would accrue to the nation from the annihilation of its debt. You, yourself, in this paragraph have exposed the absurdity of this idea, and the arguments you have employed for the purpose of shewing that a nation suffers in proportion to the quantity of taxes raised upon its people, equally serves to shew that it would be a sufferer, from the same cause, by ceasing to pay its annuitants. The two operations, as to this purpose, bear a most intimate resemblance: the one is a transfer of property as much as the other, and the one species of property, as the other, in the course of this transfer, is exposed to the same species of loss.—II. Among the inconveniencies that would result from the extinction of the debt, I had stated that one of its consequences would be the causing an increase in the number of paupers, and that the expense that would be to be incurred in the maintenance of these paupers, would be so much to be deducted from the benefit intended to be conferred on the non-annuitants. That persons who are not now paupers would then come to be such, appears to be admitted by you: but, by way of set off, you state that at the same time, and as a consequence of the same operation, a *dispauperation* would be made. As to what may be the probable proportion between those who would thus be pauperized, and those who would be dispauperized, we have not the benefit of your opinion. Why it appears that none will be released from the poor-house, but that every one that is sent there by the extinction of the debt, and some you admit there will be, will be a pure increase to the already existing number will be seen hereafter, when it comes to be shewn that no diminution can be made in the amount of the taxes that are at present collected. I am ready to admit that *all* the persons that would, as a consequence of this measure, be deprived of their present employ, would not come to be maintained by the parish. Many of them would find other employments: less profitable employments it must be supposed they will be, or men would rather have resorted to them in the first instance, than have continued in those out of which they would thus be driven. This however supposes employment waiting for their reception, and that the demand for labour is now greater than its supply. This may be true: there may be an effective demand for labour in the kingdom. But if there be such present effective demand for labour, whence is it that it arises that so many paupers continue in the poor houses?

—If there exist sources of employ for other persons, is it to be supposed that these sources of employ are not open and known to the persons who at present inhabit our poor houses? And if it be not to be ascribed to the want of employ, other causes must be looked to, to account for the increase of the number of paupers, independently of an increase in the misery of the country occasioned by the burthen of the taxes, and which, therefore, would not, to any material extent, be relieved by a remission of a small part of those taxes. Among the causes that have contributed to the increase of the *absolute* number of paupers, may be enumerated, 1st. the improved state of medicine, and the additional care that is now be taken of persons in this situation: thus by a prolongation of their lives, a greater increase in their number will appear to have taken place at one time than at another? 2. An increase in the whole map of the population, and thus a proportional increase in the number of paupers, argues not a *diminution* in the national prosperity, but merely that we are *stationary* in this respect. I would not be understood as looking upon these circumstances as of themselves sufficient to account for the rapid increase there has of late years taken place in the number of paupers: but they are mentioned with a view of shewing that we are not to presume that exactly by so much as pauperism has increased, by so much has human misery increased. Whatever may be the suffering occasioned by the proposed measure, if we suppose it anything short of absolute deprivation of existence, the demand for the *necessaries of life* must of course remain nearly the same as before. But surely it is not meant to be contended, that all men pay, by what they consume, the same quantity of taxes. To the consumption of some commodities that are highly taxed, must be substituted the consumption of others that are not so highly taxed: to the consumption of wine for instance, must be substituted the consumption of beer: and hence, that no diminution may take place in the revenue at present raised, either those commodities that are already taxed, must be still higher taxed, or new objects of taxation must be resorted to. —III. With regard to the diminution that would take place in its value by the transfer of this property from hand to hand, and which is the most important part of the question, there are placed together three passages from my letter, upon which, by comparing them, the conclusion drawn is, that my ideas upon this point are far from being clear. It is true I have called

it a transfer of property: I still consider it as such. But, because I have called it a transfer, it does not follow that I should consider it as a transfer that could be made without loss: that every thing that was taken from A, should fall, undepreciated in its value, into the hands of B. I have stated my persuasion that the contrary would be the case; and this persuasion, I am so fortunate as to have confirmed by what you have said on the subject under the first head. On this point, if we were to take so narrow a view of the question as to confine our ideas to the mere nominal pecuniary suffering, our conclusions as you have stated, would be far from being correct. You have yourself shewn, and it is so manifest that it is impossible not to admit it, that besides that the ceasing to pay interest to the annuitants would occasion the loss of employ to various classes of persons who are now supported by means of these annuities, it might (and I do not mean to fix you to this admission, because you have stated it hypothetically) "it might occasion the total destruction of some branches of manufacture." If this be the case, must not this occasion a diminution in the revenue, and must not that diminution be supplied by taxes imposed in some other shape on the persons who are left to bear them? For that we must continue to pay the same quantity of taxes after the extinction of the debt, as are now raised, I shall shew presently. — Among the persons who would be obliged to change their mode of employ, you have enumerated menial servants: we will admit, for the purpose of the argument, that they would immediately be able to find means of subsistence as agricultural labourers. But would they continue to yield the same tax as agricultural labourers, as is now paid for them as menial servants? Would not there come to be made a defalcation from the produce of the taxes derived from this source? And what would be the effect of at once turning over all these persons, together with the "150 thousand tax-gatherers" you speak of, upon the wages of labour? Would it occasion no diminution in them? Would the forcing these several classes of men thus to provide themselves, produce no diminution in the demand for the produce of the already existing stock of agriculturalists? Thus by way of alleviating the condition of the farmer, you narrow the market for his produce, and thus diminishing his profit, send a swarm of others to share with him what he has left. It is perfectly true, as you observe, that a man who now makes silk shoes, may make leather shoes: but,

inasmuch as leather, in the common course of things, are much more durable than silk, shoes, unless we suppose a very sudden increase in the demand for this commodity, a portion of shoemakers, as well as others, must seek other means of subsistence. It requires but a very superficial consideration to convince us, how difficult it is to transfer the capacity for labour of large masses of men, from one species of employment to another. Of this difficulty you have been aware: and have accordingly consigned so many persons as you will admit may be under the necessity of changing their employment, on account of the facility with which it may be learned, to agricultural pursuits. But that even the transfer, attended, in appearance, with so little difficulty, we cannot form any well grounded expectation will take place silently, and as it were imperceptibly, when we recollect the great inconvenience that was formerly experienced upon the cessation in the demand for a particular species of manufacture, and thence is the demand for the labour of the persons who were employed in carrying it on. I allude to the Birmingham button manufacturers. Had it been supposed that these persons could easily have found other sources of employ, would an act of parliament have been passed, prohibiting persons, under a penalty, from wearing any other sort of buttons than those which they manufactured? This case at least serves to shew the sense that was entertained, upon inquiry, by parliament, of the great suffering that is occasioned by the forcing men from one species of employ into another.—As to the decrease in the number of persons that would pay to the poor rates, I am perfectly aware, that the annuitants, *as such*, are not contributors to this tax, and that, as you state, were the measure in question to be carried into effect, it would cause no diminution in the quantity of land, nor in the number of houses in the kingdom. But it appears to have been forgotten, that many of the annuitants derive a sufficient income from their property on the funds to enable them to keep houses, and that when those annuities are taken from them, they must quit their houses. Empty houses pay not to the poor rates: and hence then, by every house that thus lost its tenant, would arise a diminution in the productiveness of this tax: unless it be supposed, as you have stated (and which I shall shew presently cannot be the case) that the sinking of the annuitants would weigh up an equal number of non-annuitants to supply their place. It has very recently been ad-

mitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the effect of making an addition of 5 per cent. to the Income Tax, would be to drive many persons out of their houses into lodgings: and may we not thence infer, that the same effect would be occasioned by this measure?—IV. What is said as to my ideas upon the limits of taxation, appears to have proceeded upon some misapprehension. There is evidently a wide distinction between the benefits that would accrue to the public, by the ceasing to levy 30 millions of taxes, and by taking a revenue of 30 millions from one part of the community, and giving it to the other. By the first measure, so much unqualified benefit would be conferred on the individuals from whom the taxes would otherwise have come to be collected. By the second measure, viz. the taking it from one part of the community and giving it to the other, there would, by your own shewing, be some loss occasioned. The whole of it would not perhaps be lost in its passage from hand to hand: but, besides the pecuniary loss, as above shewn, it would produce a degree of moral and physical suffering, for the estimating of which in pounds, shillings, and pence, we unfortunately possess no appropriate scale.—V. By way of alleviating the alarm that might be occasioned by the restriction of the debt, you propose, I observe, that instead of ceasing at once to pay interest to the annuitants, gradual deductions should be made from their annuities. The distress occasioned by performing the operation thus, might, probably, be less than would arise by a sudden deprivation of their income from this source. But as to any good effect that this would have, other than gradually accustoming people to the calamity that awaited them, I see not. In what way will it give them an opportunity of disposing of the property they possess in this shape to greater advantage? Who is to buy it and be the losers? If any body, it must be the ignorant and unwary, who are the objects of your anxiety. If any body profits by it, it must be the experienced fund dealer, who seems to be the object of your indignation. What consolation can we derive from the reflection that some unknown person may suffer, instead of some other equally unknown person? How can we reap any satisfaction from imagining, that, by fraud, one man may shift off the loss that is falling upon him, from himself to some one else? For the ceasing to pay interest on the debt, the sanction of parliament must of course be obtained. It cannot be supposed that a measure that appears so abhorrent to general feelings and opinions,



and which so many persons would have an interest in opposing, could be carried through both Houses of Parliament, without its being known out of doors that such a plan was in contemplation. It is while it was under consideration, and before the annuitants knew precisely what would be their fate, that the confusion would arise. Every man would then be anxious to dispose of the property he possessed in this shape. The timid, perhaps, in the hope of saving something from the general wreck, and under the apprehension that a more sudden cessation in the payment of his annuity would take place, than upon consideration, might be thought expedient, would sell to the better informed, or more accurate conjecturer, whatever property he possessed in this shape for a mere trifle. When the act came to be passed, declaring what proportion should from time to time be deducted, and fixing the period at which the annuities would cease altogether to be paid, the confusion would cease: the value of the property would then clearly be known, and no more than sullen dissatisfaction might, perhaps, be manifested.—It appears to be with satisfaction, that you state, that “those who had their all in the funds some very few years ago, have, many of them at least, already taken care to vest a part in real property.” It might have been more instructive had you put your readers in possession of the facts upon which this conclusion was founded. It is with the appearance of approbation that the persons who have “*taken care*” to act thus are mentioned. But why are these men to be regarded with approbation, any more than those who have fortune sufficient to leave their money in the funds, while at the same time, as you state, an impression is become general, that all property in this shape must speedily be confiscated? If any such impression really prevails, the objects of our commendation ought rather to be those who are content to run the risk of losing their property for the service of the state, than those who cautiously take it out of harm’s way. How would it be were every body who now possesses money in the funds to “take care” to convert it into some other shape? Would they too all be deserving of praise? And those again to whom it was sold, were they to sell it again, would their conduct too be equally meritorious? Thus, if the argument be valid, is the means pointed out of accumulating a quantity of merit in the country, to an extent to which there appears no assignable limits.—VI. What I had in view, when I said that all the predictions

that had been ventured as to the amount of the debt, without sinking under it, that the nation could bear, was, besides opinions coming from less dignified stations, what had been said by Sir Robert Walpole, viz. that the nation could never bear a debt equal to a million. As to the *amount* of the debt that the nation could bear, Hume cautiously avoids all predictions.—With respect to the good or bad effects that the existence of the National Debt has had upon the morals of the country, in what degree if in any, it has deranged the balance of the constitution, and what might have been the relative power of England, and the state of the rest of Europe, had no such debt been created, these are questions of such delicate intricacy, and would require so many elements to be taken into consideration to come to any correct conclusion upon them, that I shall forbear, for the present at least, to enter into any disquisitions upon them. Fortunately, however, such discussions as these are not necessary for our present purpose. By whatever cause it may have been produced, we find ourselves in the midst of an expensive war, most grievously burthened with taxes, and with every prospect of an annual increase to those taxes coming to be required. Such is our situation: and if no other source of relief can be pointed out, it is at least desirable that the public should be taught the real value of, and the alleviation that may be expected from resorting to this resource, which the object seems to be to accustom them to look up to as an effectual, and as the only means to work their salvation.—Let us now for a moment advert to the situation in which we should find ourselves, after, admitting it to be effected without popular commotion, having released ourselves from the payment of the annuitants, and what relief we should derive from it. We must bear in mind, that what is represented is, that we are *now* in a perilous situation; That to save ourselves from being conquered, it is *present* and *immediate* relief that we require, and that the extinction of the debt would afford us this *present* and *immediate* relief.—In the opening of the last Budget the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated (see Cobbett’s Parliamentary Debates VI. 564) that the amount of the charge on account of the debt was now £26,000,000. From this 26 millions, for the purpose in question, would come to be deducted about 1,500,000 being the amount of the sum that is now paid by the annuitants to the Property Tax, which reduces the 26,000,000 to 24,500,000. This 24,500,000 is the annual sum that, by

the supposition, we should be exonerated from the payment of by the extinction of the National Debt. But is it supposed that taxes to this amount would then immediately be taken off? Have we forgotten then that there was a *loan* last year to the amount of 20 millions? Do you look forward in the present state of Europe to any great and speedy diminution in our expenditure? Must not the same expenditure, as is now borne, be kept up next year, and next year, for a period of unforeseen duration? Immediately after the abolition of the present debt, would you make a fresh loan and create a fresh debt? And if you do not make a fresh loan, and create a fresh debt, how are our burthens to be alleviated? Here are but five millions of taxes that can be remitted: and not even this, unless it be supposed, contrary to what you have yourself admitted, that no suffering whatever, no diminution in the produce of any existing tax, will be occasioned by the extinction of the debt. And is it from the remission of 5 millions of taxes that you predict such gigantic effects? Is it by this, that the now depressed are to be exalted, that the pauper is to be restored to opulence, that the condition of the farmer is to be ameliorated, that gold is again to be restored to the circulation, and that "150 thousand tax gatherers are to be converted into useful labourers and artizans?"—Before I conclude, I would beg to submit to you, whether, if by any means, we were to get rid of our present debt, the creation of a fresh debt, unless some more eligible and less objectionable means for the purpose could be pointed out, would not, in case of war, be a measure warranted by substantial expediency and general utility. It appears to be not merely the *preferable*, but the *only* means that can be devised, for making posterity contribute to those expenses from which they, in fact, derive the greatest benefit. It is a system that is obviously liable to abuse: it is, however, like all other human expedients, a choice of evils, and can only be truly estimated by the preponderance of good or bad effects of which it may be productive.—I am, Sir, your humble servant,—*DECIUS*.—Oct. 1, 1806.

NAPOLÉON'S POWER OVER OUR FUNDS.

SIR:—I have read with attention your observations in the Political Register, of the 13th of September, pointing out the injuries which, in your view of the subject, it may be in the power of Buonaparte, or any other head of the French nation, to inflict on the general prosperity of the country, even dur-

ing a time of peace, through the medium of the National Debt. These observations appear to have placed the subject in a new point of view: and though, upon examination, the ground for alarm should not be found so great as at first sight it might appear to be, your readers cannot but feel highly indebted to you for calling the general attention to this subject, as well as for the candid manner in which you offer to give the remarks of your correspondents a place in your Register. Of this offer I now propose to avail myself, for the purpose of stating such considerations as appear to render the carrying on, with success, the system in question, if not altogether impracticable, at least highly improbable.—To compensate for the skill, trouble, and expense, with which the making a profit by this means, in the English funds, must unavoidably be attended with, it is admitted that the profits must be of very considerable magnitude. True it is, that by a person in Buonaparte's situation, these profits might be made without the employment of any capital. He might, by means of his agents, (though the transaction is illegal) agree for a given quantity of stock, at some future period, and in the mean time he might, by the supposition, by assuming a menacing or conciliatory aspect, cause either a depression or rise in the funds, as might suit the purposes of his bargain. For the sake of precision, let us suppose the quantity of stock, purchased, or sold, in this way, to amount to two millions; and let us further suppose, that by some diplomatic contrivance, he had caused a rise or fall in the funds to the amount of five *per cent*. Here then would be a clear gain of 50,000*l*. Before this 50,000*l*. would amount to the six millions you speak of, (p. 421) this same operation must have been performed, (supposing for the sake of simplicity, the effects to have been produced by it, the same in each instance) twelve times in two years. Thus there would be acquired a clear gain of six millions in two years; and this gain too absolutely clear, because acquired without any equivalent having been given for it. The consequences would, doubtless, be very disastrous: but fortunately, however, numerous obstacles present themselves that appear to prevent the successful execution of any such scheme.—To acquire in this way, these six millions within the time specified, viz. two years, it will have been necessary, that Buonaparte, by means of his emissaries, should have succeeded in prevailing upon the government and people of England, to

have believed six times each year, a rumour that these same emissaries had propagated, and which rumour should produce an elevation or depression in the funds, to the amount of five *per cent.* But how often would these rumours produce their desired effect? How often would the people be successfully deluded to stake, perhaps their very means of existence, upon unsupported rumours, of the failure of similar ones, to which, recent instances had occurred? It is not compatible either with the success of the scheme, that the persons by whom these rumours are spread should be obscure and unknown, and capable of eluding by their insignificance the discredit which the failure in the correctness of their intelligence would fix upon them. It is essential to the success of the plan, that the persons employed be known to be agents of the French government, that the rumours be known to have originated with them, and that these rumours be believed. But would not the very circumstance of the source from whom they proceeded, especially after their incorrectness has once been experienced, and, when it was known they were propagated for stock-jobbing purposes, (and where the purchases or sales are of a large extent, this must be matter of general notoriety) be sufficient to prevent any person, even of no more than an ordinary degree of prudence from falling into the snare thus prepared for him? It may be observed, that Buonaparté will not rely solely upon mere verbal threats or soothings, or that upon failure of their producing the desired effect, he will put himself in a posture suited to the carrying those declarations into execution. If this were the case where would arise the *profits* of the scheme? It cannot but be supposed but that the putting on a warlike aspect, would be attended with infinitely more loss than would be compensated for, by any precarious prospect of gain in the English funds. Still less profitable, perhaps, would it be, were it necessary to the success of the scheme, that a warlike aspect should constantly be kept up. From any sudden or unforeseen attack, we are protected by our insular situation; and it is not probable that were Buonaparté, while there was every appearance of profound peace, suddenly to march an army down to the opposite coast, with the declared intention of embarking it forthwith for the invasion of this country, that it would produce any very material effect on the funds. It is only by some such sudden operation as this, that the desired effect could be produced: and the having

performed it once, would disenable him from performing it a second time.—But admitting that Buonaparté had from some means or other, no matter how, become master of stock to the amount of a million pounds, and that the consequence of stock to this amount, being known at any time to have been suddenly sold out by a French agent, would be the producing a sudden depression in the funds; yet here, as in the former case, besides the probably smaller profit with which it would be attended, the operation for the same reasons as those mentioned above, could not with success, be frequently repeated. Any great and sudden fluctuation in the funds is now, besides, by the great capital, which there is constantly at command, effectually prevented by the operation of the Sinking Fund. No material depression is now produced in the funds by the selling out large quantities of stock, since the Sinking Fund commissioners are at all times ready to take it up. Should it however still be proved that Buonaparté had acquired a sufficient mass of stock, by the selling out of which, and subsequent buying in again, he could make considerable profit, legal provisions might be resorted to for making it penal, or punishable in any other way; for any person to sell one day any more than a given quantity of stock: 50,000*l.* worth for example. By such a provision, individuals could not be affected, nor would their rights be in any way compromised. I merely mention 50,000*l.* by way of example. The sum might be much larger. It might be fixed at that sum, the selling out of which, by one individual, was not found from experience, to produce any material effect upon the price of the funds.—But, independently of the above considerations, the constant attention which the conducting with success the system of causing, by means of rumours, sudden depressions or elevations in the funds, would require, on the part of the French government, appears to oppose an effectual bar to a plan such as that in question, being carried into effect, to any material extent. By the supposition, measures are not designed to be pushed to an extremity; but a most delicate trimming system is to be pursued; and while the declared intentions are never actually to be converted into acts, they must invariably be believed to be about to be immediately followed up by acts. The same contrivance could not successfully be repeated: for every successive deception, a new device must have been hit upon. The whole time and invention of the French

government, were it exclusively devoted to this single object, would scarcely be sufficient, unless we were absolute ideots, to keep a negotiation in such a state, as to enable them as often as it might be convenient, to command our credence of any assertions, they might choose to make. The French have ever had the reputation of being able negociators: but your ingenuity, Sir, seems to have devised a task for them, and held out a reward for the successful execution of it, upon their success in the reaping of which, they would not I imagine, be desirous of seeing their skill in diplomacy pronounced.—I am, Sir, your humble servant, DECIUS. — 17th September, 1806.

CAVALRY OFFICERS.

SIR;—As your Weekly Political Register is now almost the only channel, through which truth can be conveyed to the public, I have deemed it highly expedient, if worthy of your insertion, to state to you, a few particulars, respecting the situation of the subalterns, holding commissions, in the British cavalry; who having been buoyed up for some time past, by Mr. Windham's motions in behalf of the army, find themselves somewhat disappointed in being excluded the small benefit of an increase of allowances; an increase, (although trifling) yet, absolutely requisite to assist them in their unavoidable expenses. Perhaps it is not generally known, that the pay of the officers of cavalry, has experienced no real increase since the reign of Queen Anne; (although every article of life has increased in a quintuple proportion) and that a consolidation, merely of the pay and increase of pay, took place (I believe) in the years, 1703 or 4, and at which time the officers were ordered to refund, for the keep of their two chargers, as subalterns, 17d. per diem.—I will, however, proceed to a statement of the expenses attendant on a young gentleman's first entrance into the cavalry, and some of his subsequent necessary, disbursements:

	£.	s.	d.
1st. His commission as cornet (if purchased) - - -	735	0	0
Agents fees, on ditto - - -	5	10	6
2d. Two chargers, at least 50 gs. each - - -	105	0	0
Saddlery and horse furniture, for ditto - - -	36	10	0
Two regimental laced jackets (at least) - - -	31	10	0
Carried over - - -	913	10	6

Brought forward	913	10	6
Two ditto cocked hats, or hat and cap and feathers - - -	8	8	0
Three pair of white feathers - - -	9	9	0
Two pair of regimental jack-boots - - -	6	6	0
Pair of regimental spurs - - -	2	2	0
Broad Sword, small sword, belts and knots - - -	9	9	0
A regimental dress coat - - -	25	0	0
Two regimental vests - - -	3	0	0
Two pair pantaloons (kerseymere) - - -	4	0	0
Two pair of white kersymere smallclothes - - -	3	0	0
Two pair of regimental half boots with spurs - - -	5	8	0
A regimental great coat - - -	5	5	0
A ditto cloak - - -	6	6	0
Two pair of gloves (military) - - -	1	1	0
His subscription to the mess fund - - -	10	10	0
His ditto to the band - - -	3	3	0
To the riding-master for instructions - - -	3	3	0
To the same for breaking-in his chargers - - -	4	4	0
To orderly serjeants for instruction in the exercise - - -	1	1	0
Total - - -	1024	5	6

The minor articles of sashes, stocks, shirts, stockings, handkerchiefs, and sundries, together with a battalion mans wages and clothing, I may safely allot £50 for. His messing expense, (with good economy) stands him in, at least, £3 per week, when in stationary quarters; and on a march it is nearer £5. On the other hand his pay as cornet amounts to the astonishing sum of £146 per annum; being at the rate of 8s. per diem, from which deduct 1s. 5d. daily, for the keep of his two horses; he is thus left with the free and uncontrouled power over six shillings and seven pence a day. Should he by any good fortune, gain a lieutenancy, he then will enjoy the supreme satisfaction of contributing a ten per centage on £164, per annum. He, also, pays the assessed tax for his chargers, but which is again refunded by his regimental agent; though with some difficulty, as those gentlemen are very careful of the public monies. In addition to these facts, I must observe, by way of digression, that if an officer is of a changeable disposition with respect to his dress, he may, in many regiments, be humoured as often as three or four times a year. These changes depending in a great degree on the whim and caprice of the officer commanding the corps. His Majesty's regulations in regard to the dress of officers seem to be almost totally exploded. I must, also, state that if an officer should be ordered

from his quarter, to assist at a general court martial, although detained on the business several weeks, and living, unavoidably, at an increased expense, he does not receive a single sou beyond his pay, in compensation for the pains and trouble he has taken to execute and fulfil the orders of the state. From these circumstances, well and truly known to any officer, it must appear, that should a young man of good education and abilities, and possessing no private fortune, be presented with a subaltern commission in the cavalry, his pay for the two first years, will be swallowed up in his equipment; he must then quit his corps, probably be arrested, and march to a spunging house attended by a bailiff's escort, instead of marching to his regimental mess, bedecked with all "the pomp and circumstance of war." The cavalry, in general, feel highly obliged to Mr. Windham, for the flattering opinion he seems to entertain of the state of their finances; but I query, if he ever, seriously, studied their real situation; if he had, he would have found that most of the officers in that service, were minus many pounds at the expiration of every year, and that not the result of their own imprudence. We have observed the very magnificent increase he has caused to be granted to the infantry, which, to say nothing worse of it, is merely a mockery of liberality, and proves most clearly to the liberal and thinking part of the nation, that his much boasted plan for the amelioration of the army, is a mere bubble, and a chaos from the beginning to the end.

—I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

AN EQUESTRIAN.

FORGERY AND COINING.

SIR,—I know not whether the subject of this letter is within the plan of your paper in which, if admissible I should be glad to see it, as I know your publication is read by those who have the power to make any alteration in the laws, humanity or policy may suggest.—When the crime of forgery was made felony, and followed up without reprieve, it was done from the hope that the greatness of the punishment, compared with the benefits the criminal had to expect from the crime, would have acted as a certain preventative; but the fatal experience of a long series of years, has shewn us how very far the result has been to the contrary. The reason is, that in the majority of cases, the act is committed by unthinking youths, to relieve some temporary embarrassment, the extravagances of their age, or the necessity of appearing genteel upon a trifling salary, has produced. The accumulated paper

capital of this kingdom, both national and individual, has increased the temptation a thousand fold, and every session in town and country brings to the place of execution an increasing number of young men, victims to a momentary delusion, who instead of being corrected by some salutary law, and rendered, as they would be, in nine cases out of ten, good members of society in future.—For this crime of a moment, for this offence so easily committed, that no moral duty, no outrage against society (in their eyes) seems to be infringed, they are hung up, without the hope of mercy, from that throne, which holds out mercy to the most abandoned criminals, and whose brightest and most useful quality is that heavenly attribute. Their relations, for the most part, persons of reputation and credit, are wrung to agony by the punishment of their unthinking son or brother; they feel with inward and bitter grief the excess of the punishment, when compared to the crime, and they regard with horror that sanguinary decree, which admits of no shades in the crime, but dooms all that are guilty to indiscriminate death.—Surely then when conviction in such tremendous characters tells us that the punishment is not adapted to the crime, it is time to turn round and listen to humanity, for policy has expended her arguments.—Humanity would teach us, that the life of a man, of a fellow countryman, ought not to be taken away for every trifling infringement of that property which God has bestowed upon us, or suffered us to acquire. God himself has given life to his creatures, but we, surrounded by property and luxury, wantonly decree, that whosoever layeth his finger upon that property shall die. We ourselves, do not remember that we create a factious and fictitious property, for every note of hand is a counterfeit property. We make a false and deceptions capital, we take upon ourselves virtually the act of coining, with which we enrich ourselves, and we doom to irretrievable death, an unthinking fellow-being, who perhaps, in this one solitary instance only, has committed an act of dishonesty, and whose general character is as moral as our own.—Another strange outrage against the spirit of laws is, that we do not punish the crime in this case, for the crime must consist in the injury the party sustains in his property, if the money or value has been paid; but we hang up hundreds for the intention of defrauding.—Suppose, as is mostly the case the forgery is detected when offered for payment, no property is infringed; no man

has suffered a farthing by the fraud; yet there is no mercy for the criminal he must die for the intention. Do we hang up men for intending to commit a highway robbery. Do we hang up men for any other criminal intention, without the act? No; because in that case, our tribunals would equal those of revolutionary France, where men were murdered for being suspected of being suspicious.—The subject is so very extensive, that a volume might be written upon it. All I can hope is, therefore that some of your readers in the high circles of life, will think of repealing this fatal and insufficient statute: and to suggest some other punishment, short of human life, without the least encouraging this crime which certainly, in a commercial point of view, is a very great one. We ought to consider the motives, the temptation, and the facility of the act. We ought to remember that merchants, bankers, and others, will have clerks dressed like gentlemen; and, to say nothing of the influence of example in manners, we should remember, that in numerous instances, the income of those clerks is not more than that of a mechanic whose clothing is not worth 40 shillings.—There is no man who thinks for a moment, from the Lord Chancellor, to the public informer, who does not see the inequality of the penal laws. The greatest criminals shall escape from a wrong word in the indictment. The most trifling degrees of guilt in a moral or political point of view shall be punished with cool determinate death. Year after year we go on, and there is no man found to come forward in the cause of erring humanity.—Were those youths, who are guilty of the crime of forgery, compelled to serve the party injured without wages, or to pay weekly a certain portion of their wages till the sum was repaid fourfold; and, at the same time were compelled to wear a particular habit of disgrace, the crime would certainly become extinct.—The Romans made laws, in vain, to prevent females from committing suicide, till they decreed that the naked body should be exposed and dragged through the streets; for 200 years after, I believe no instance of suicide occurred.—But as this may appear to us an Utopian proposition, transportation or solitary confinement are surely worth trying. Garrison duty abroad, or in noxious climates, might spare more deserving men, and would benefit the state which in point of policy gains nothing by the death of any criminal.—Till our legislators think it a matter deserving their atten-

tion, let every man, who has suffered or nearly suffered, from forgery, put these questions to himself: At how many pounds do I value *my own life*? Is the life of another man of equal value to him? Have I suffered any personal violence or personal fear? What is the general character of this man? Is it likely he would be of any use in society were I to pardon him? Am I a christian, and will I, for the sake of a few pounds, deprive a fellow-being of life, who has not otherwise injured me. Whose relations must also suffer a continuance of anguish, and, perhaps, by the death of this unfortunate wretch, be doomed to misery for the remainder of their lives? Were it *my brother, my son*, should I not think for this solitary crime he *might* be pardoned? Yes; *I will* pardon him. It is a crime that man may pardon, and angels thank him for the mercy.—The second part of my subject relates to coining and uttering counterfeit money. From some political reason, there has been only one coinage of silver during the present long reign, and that so very small in quantity, that the whole as it dribbled into circulation, was laid by in the purses of the ladies as pocket-pieces or play-things for their children. Thus, the circulating silver is composed of a very few mint shillings and a great many flat pieces of silver, which never boasted any impression but the flattening mill. Hence arises two consequences, the first, that they are very easily imitated by poor mechanics; and the second, that, as the retail trade of this kingdom cannot be conducted without them, there is a demand for every base metal which can be thrown into circulation in form of a shilling; and, notwithstanding this addition, it is well known, that almost every shopkeeper in London loses more than one customer in a day for want of small change.—Thus the demand for base money, created by that policy, of preferring the demand, of foreign nations, for silver, before our own country, tempts the vicious, the idle, and the profligate, to become makers of false coin, who employ poor people, whose wants expose them to the temptation, either to sell them or pass them themselves.—In order to come at these dealers or utterers as they are termed, where the magistrates have suspicion, they dress up some wretch to decoy the victim into the snare.—Thus *they* tempt the party into the crime, and, remember the second offence is death.—In the very last sessions, which has just closed, a woman thus dressed and tutored was sent to the lodgings of a

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poor family, the husband was out, the wife and children were at home. The woman sold 10 bad shillings for 4 flat bits of silver. The fiend of an informer immediately flies to the constables at the door; the wretched mother is dragged away, surrounded by her children, and the gallows will again groan with another victim, and another family of wretched babes will be thrown upon public charity.—What is the excuse for this waste of human blood? Truly, that the crime could not easily be detected without blood hounds were employed to scent it out and tempt the victim into the action.—Mark, Sir, the train of these evils, see where it originates. It is left to coiners to supply the nation with a circulating silver or all retail trade must cease. Then we send people to the houses, to the fife side, to the families of these offenders, to tempt their poverty to the crime; then Sir, for this very act, we hang them up rub our hands, and go home to dinner thanking God who has placed us above temptation.—G. W.

DEFENCE OF THE CATHOLICS.

SIR,—You have inserted in your Political Register of September 20th, a letter under the signature of W. F. S., on the subject of Catholic Claims. I profess myself to be a zealous, though not a bigoted Catholic; and, were I to address myself immediately to your correspondent, so uncandid do I find the general stile of his reasoning, that I should with difficulty refrain from harshness of expression: but I shall endeavour to lose sight of the man, and, from the respect which is due to the medium through which my answer is to pass, I hope to confine myself to a temperate, and dispassionate examination of his arguments. Your correspondent divides the question into a consideration of the right of the Catholics to emancipation, and the policy of admitting it; and, in a very few words, lops off the most important branch by deciding, that “the question of right sinks before the hopes of the most sanguine Catholic coadjutor,” because every state has a right to a national religion, and to point out of what persuasion that national religion shall be composed. I do not apprehend the imputation of treason against the state, if I deny the existence of such a right. Men never made, nor are they implied to have made a sacrifice of conscience on entering into society: the religious belief of every individual must be independent of any respect for human institutions, or it becomes mere mockery in the eyes of man, and of no avail before God. When the

great author of the Christian religion revealed his divine doctrine for the salvation of mankind, he fell a sacrifice to the usurpation of the right in question: he denied that a nation could legally fetter the consciences of men, and he bled in contradiction of that very doctrine, which your correspondent considers as immutably just. The English history confirms the non-existence of such a right; or, if it exist at all, proves it to be in favour of the Catholics. St. Austin first preached to our ancestors the religion, which the Catholics continue to profess, in its original purity. The right to dictate a national religion was then originally theirs, and they held it until Henry the VIIIth, in defiance of the state, in contempt of that religion, broke down its bulwarks because they opposed the torrent of his debauchery. The government of England was at that time despotic, and the arbitrary monarch, from the vilest of motives, without any view to the well-being of the state, directed the whole artillery of his power against the church, which stood up the champion of innocence in the person of his injured queen. No Protestant will attempt to justify the divorce of Henry from Catherine of Arragon, or his adulterous espousal of Ann Balleyn: yet they must acknowledge, that to this unworthy transaction, done without any view to the national advantage, without the concurrence of the clergy, they owe the origin of their present religious establishment. I beg it may be understood that I do not mean to cast obloquy upon the national church. I wish only to shew, from the history of its rise and progress, that the nation did not suppose in itself a right to legislate in matters of religion. The short reign of Henry's son, King Edward, promoted the new doctrines, and the obedient nation adopted them. Queen Mary pronounced them heretical, and the obedient nation returned within the pale of the church, and would have never wandered beyond its limits if Elizabeth had been educated a Catholic. She however, established the Church of England, and the state adopted its articles of faith; until a sect of presbyterians, in a subsequent reign, proscribed their promulgation, and voted episcopacy useless. It therefore, appears to be a plain deduction from reason, as well as from historical testimony, that no nation possesses the right to legislate in matters of religion, and that the British nation has never pre-umed upon such a right, though its sovereigns have frequently usurped a power over conscience. The endeavours of the Catholics to obtain the full

enjoyment of their birth-right is represented by your correspondent, as an avidity to participate in a division of the political spoils. What is patriotism then extinguished in Britain? Are we become so commercial that all are presumed to veil, under the pretence of serving the state, a spirit of rapine, for the censure is general, and it is only from the existing practices of other sects that the Catholics are presumed to thirst after a share of the common plunder. I hope the picture is a calumny: the Englishman cannot be so universally corrupted: and, I am sure that the virtuous Catholics no less abhor such public robberies, than the purest Protestant. They feel that they possess talents, in common with their countrymen, and they lament that these talents must be confined to the humbler walks of life, the low drudgery of labour and commerce: they desire to assist in the great work of saving their country, and are hurt at the injustice, as well as impolicy, of the restrictions which they labour under. Let your correspondent who talks of a division of spoils, answer whether the father of a family, anxious for the welfare of his children, can see without regret that they are excluded from the honourable, the liberal and the lucrative professions, to which all subjects have an unalienable right? The heart of my boy beats with enthusiasm when he reads of the heroism of his countrymen, and is this noble spirit to be cramped within the vile limits of a counter or a counting house? He dares not aspire to military honours, without disowning or sacrificing his higher duties. To what eminence can he hope to attain in the profession of the law? To what even in physic? "Choose a physician that feareth God, saith the pious John Westley, or a curse, rather than a blessing, will attend his labours." And they who pin their faith on John Westley's sleeve, would revolt at the idea of employing a Catholic physician. Can a Catholic place his son, even as a clerk in a public office, in the Bank, or in the India House? *And does he cease to evidence any Christian-like virtues because he complains of this debilitating and degrading system?* I appeal from the injustice of your correspondent to the liberality of the nation; and I assert, in the name of my Catholic brethren, the purity of our patriotism, the integrity of our conduct, and the Christian character of our virtues. But *discord would be the consequence of admitting our claims*, says your correspondent, for evil is inevitable, "if you make a Turk a premier, a Catholic a Secretary of State, and a Protestant a First Lord of the Admiralty."

But does the good man's penetration not pierce the flimsy veil of conformity, which covers the diversity of fundamental principles among our statesmen and governors. All liberally educated men have some principles of religion or philosophy; and even philosophy, as we learn from Gibbon's history, and as we have seen in the revolution of France, is susceptible of the most intolerant bigotry. I avoid all personal allusions, and therefore will not draw my examples from the instances of the present day; but I challenge W. F. S. to name a Premier, a Secretary of State, and a First Lord of the Admiralty, within the last century, who did not differ in the fundamental principles of religious or philosophical belief, as much as the three sectaries whom he contrasts together. But still more discordant opinions (as your correspondent may learn from Cicero's beautiful dialogue *de matura deorum*) by no means disturb the perfect harmony of our virtuous men, on questions of public utility. —Need I instance the examples of foreign nations to shew, that states derive benefit from the indiscriminate employment of men of talents, without regard to their religious persuasion? The King of Prussia, a Protestant, governs, according to one uniform system, a nation, of which a great proportion (the inhabitants of Poland and Silesia) are Catholics; his army is recruited with Catholics, they are admitted to seats in his council, and represent him at foreign courts. The Elector of Saxony, a Catholic prince, governs a Protestant people with more paternal care than any other sovereign in Europe. The Emperor of Russia has among his ministers, his generals, and his admirals, men of all sects and all nations, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans, whether Protestant or Catholics, whether of the Greek or Romish Church. And what is there in the peculiar situation of England, which can make the imitation of such practice dangerous? The succession of the royal family was supposed at one time to be connected with the maxim, that the Catholic religion was hostile to the constitution; but it is ridiculous to imagine, that his Majesty or his ministers can entertain a doubt of the loyalty of his Catholic subjects. The pretender to the throne is removed to an eternal kingdom: his claim to the inheritance of his ancestors is extinct: but though the cause of jealousy, if any cause can ever have been admitted, has long ceased to exist, the effect is still allowed to operate to the injury of the state, and the distress of individuals. —A. B. —*Hampstead, Sep. 22, 1806.*

ON THE CAPTURE OF BUENOS AYRES.—

From "The Argus," a Paper published at Paris, in the English Language.

The capture of Buenos Ayres is an event which was not to be expected, upon comparing the military strength and the population of that colony, with the feebleness of the English squadron: the conquest of French colonies is a dearer achievement. But as to the others, the successes of this kind have so amazingly multiplied in this and the last war, that it will be sufficient for the Admiralty to send notice to a colony it is in a state of capture, as they notify that it is in a state of blockade. It is not less singular to observe, that this conquest, to which they attach so much importance at London, is hardly perceived on the Continent. The invasion of a German village makes more sensation here than the conquest of a kingdom in Asia; England has reduced the European Princes to behold her greatness with indifference; she has eternally occupied them with accessory interests; she has constantly kept up their quarrels; she has carefully ruined their industry, their navy, and their trade. In the state of indifference in which she keeps them in this respect, she completes at full liberty her system; she extends on all sides her Empire; without the other powers even thinking of disputing it with her. She makes immense acquisitions almost without drawing her sword; and when she judges proper to give the world a few moments of peace, she keeps the useful conquests, and returns only ruined establishments.—England relaxed the rigours of her maritime laws, when she was apprehensive that the Continental powers might see too clearly into her pretensions, and might unite to escape her monopoly; she made concessions to neutrals, when her warehouses were glutted with goods which she wished to get rid of, or when her colonies were in want of the neutrals to supply them with subsistence. At present, she seems to announce, that the Act of Navigation is to be again resorted to in all its vigour; she regrets the sacrifices made to necessity; she thinks she has sufficiently embroiled the Powers of the Continent with their own divisions to be any longer in need of sparing them, and to consummate the ruin of their people. The heedlessness with which they see these enormous usurpations, seems wonderfully strange, upon being compared with the restless uneasiness which they display in all the affairs of the Continent.—The vulgar perceive nothing beyond the territory they inhabit; they are apt to look upon universal

trade and immense colonies as objects foreign to the power of nations; but the enlightened man sees, that in the state of civilization which Europe has arrived to, trade and the navy have a powerful influence over the strength and prosperity of empires.—He who disposes at his pleasure of the riches of India and America, and who forces nations to receive the productions of his industry, really levies enormous taxes upon them; he arbitrarily exercises what constitutes sovereignty, and this empire is not so chimerical as some people may suppose.—No doubt the political existence of France presents a more solid and a more real power. Her means are within herself, and their concentration gives her an immense advantage; but we see in their development neither the same extension nor the same inconveniences, for the prosperity of other states. Before the Revolution, France was the rival of England, as to her navy and her trade; she possessed the colonies the richest in cultivation. She lost both, and would have descended to the lowest rank of Powers, if, by the genius of her Prince, and the courage of her armies, she had not acquired on the Continent a compensation for the losses she had sustained. The power of England augmented by an immense empire in India, by several colonies in America, by the Cape, by the improvement of those she had before, and the destruction of their rival settlements, brings into the political balance of Europe such a weight, that all the influences acquired by France can hardly keep up the equilibrium. It is with the riches of both Indies that she purchases European discords. The superiority of her navy would be an irresistible advantage, if her population were at the rate of her ambitious designs, or if only she had completed the colonial conquests which she still meditates, and even over her ancient allies. She endeavours to turn aside the looks of other powers by sowing among them apprehensions upon the views of France. But upon comparing the use they have both made of their strength, it will be found, that she is the most to be dreaded and the most ambitious. On the one hand we see, that France has conquered the half of Europe, and has remained within her limits; the states attached to her federative system, might be united to her; they have remained separate, and will be independent powers. But all that England has conquered, is, definitively, annexed to her empire.—His Britannic Majesty commands in Indostan, as he does in Ireland. He has not contented himself with organi-

sing new states, nor with making allies of them. France has often seemed to fight for foreign interests, but England has always made war for her own account: and has directly appropriated to herself all the profits of it. In fine, in the state to which she has reduced the navy and trade of other nations, it is happy that the energy of a single one should have preserved the counterpoise which the blindness of several sovereigns tended to destroy.

STATE OF EUROPE.—From "*The Argus*," a Paper published at Paris, in the English Language.

Europe presents, from day to day, an aspect more strange to the attention of observers. On whatever side we turn our eyes, we find contradictions to explain, and problems to resolve.—England still evinces a desire of peace, and her writers speak of nothing but war. She prepares distant military expeditions, and keeps a negociator of the highest distinction at Paris.—Russia has refused the peace which she had solicited, and remains condemned to inaction, while she cannot find a field of battle where she may recover the advantages and the military renown which she has lost.—Prussia is at war with Sweden; but this war resembles more a village quarrel than a contest with sovereigns. And while she augments her armies, she makes preparations in such a manner as to occasion the belief, that she proposes nothing less than to attack the first power in Europe. While these three powers discuss separately their interests with France they appear to form a common alliance. But they are between themselves in a false, uncertain, and vacillating position, in the face of an enemy whose policy is fixed, and whose force belongs to himself alone.—One would be less astonished perhaps to see Russia and England concert their means of attack against an enemy whom they would have jointly to combat. But can the cause, the interests and principles of Prussia, ever accord with those of England and Russia? The past proves the contrary, and the future will undoubtedly confirm the experience of the past.—Is Prussia at this day in a position more favourable with respect to those with whom she would unite herself, and with respect to the enemy which she would dare to affront? Does she really wish to turn her arms against the power which has supported her for fifteen years against the hatred, the envy, and the indignation of all the states of Europe? Does she still pretend to deceive her allies, by clandestine engagements which

she designs to violate with the first favourable opportunity? Or rather will she, in her turn, rush into a snare which they lay for her, in order to be revenged for her past conduct? The public opinion has only the alternative between these two sentiments, until time has removed the veil which still conceals the truth.—With respect to sound policy, the resolution of Prussia to be the advanced post of a continental war, seems to us equally dangerous as tardy. She commenced her career in the continental war by a defection, which, even then, disclosed her system. Whilst Austria and France have held the equilibrium, she tranquilly collected the fruits of her tortuous, avaricious, and vacillating policy. But Austria once conquered, Prussia lost the importance of a mediator, where she had acted, perhaps, with an equal contempt for both parties. With these principles she does not offer to any one her sincere friendship. There can be no doubt that she could not resume the same system, if similar circumstances should again occur. Here is what ought to serve as a compass in negotiations with her.—The Prussian cabinet, although fortunate in its speculations, has made, in fact, less dupes than it imagines. France paid her neutrality, so as to persuade her that she was sincere, but she believed this compliance most conformable to her interests, and best adapted to restore a general peace in Europe; she acted like the Lacedæmonian general, who seeing a corps of young men disposed to deliver up a post to the enemy, contented himself with pointing out to them another, where he might watch them. What other cabinet can Prussia abuse? Is it that of St. James's, when, instead of sharing the dangers, as she had taken part in the projects of the last war, she glided after the combat over the field of battle, to carry off the fruits of the victory, and divide the spoils of the vanquished. She still keeps Hanover, and meditates an alliance with England. Her ports are still blockaded by the Swedes, and she calls them to her aid. She invokes the support of the Emperor Alexander, whom she abandoned in the midst of the dangers which she had promised to share. A sincere agreement between persons who have been so often deceived, and who have such reproaches to make to each other, it is difficult to conceive. The wounds which Prussia has occasioned still bleed. The English writers themselves cannot give credit to this monstrous alliance. The aid which she promises them, appears like the wooden horse. They tremble to receive of her pre-

sents. Thus, in spite of the positive assertions even of the Journals of Berlin, we cannot give credit to the sudden change in the conduct of Prussia, because every thing imposes on her the obligation of attaching herself more closely than ever to France. With the friendship of that power, she may cover the wrongs which she has committed towards others; with her aid she may be sure of preserving the advantages she has obtained without drawing the sword. In adopting another course, in disregarding in this point her situation and her interest, she would expose her existence and the remainder of her glory. Her inevitable fall in an unequal contest might offer compensations favourable to the re-establishment of general tranquillity. It might satisfy the resentment of betrayed powers, leave a great example, and shew that in policy as in morals there are truths and duties, the violation of which Providence will sooner or later punish.

THE JEWS.—*Letter from the Assembly of the Deputies of the Jews of France, and of the Kingdom of Italy, to those professing the same Religion. Published in the Moniteur of the 8th of October.*

The goodness of the Most High manifests itself visibly upon us. A great event is preparing. That which our fathers did not witness for a long series of ages, that which we could not have hoped to have seen in our time, is about to be made manifest to the eyes of an astonishing universe.—The 20th of October is the day appointed for the opening of a Grand Sanhedrin in the capital of one of the most powerful christian empires, and under the protection of the immortal Prince who governs it.—Paris is about to offer this spectacle to the world, and this ever memorable event will be to the dispersed remnant of the descendants of Abraham a new æra of deliverance and felicity.—Animated by sentiments which breathe the same origin and the same religion, we wish to express them to you in the effusion of our joy.—Who but must admire with us the secret designs of that Providence who by ways inscrutable to our feeble minds, changes the face of human affairs, consoles the afflicted, raises the humble from the dust, puts an end to the trials decreed by his divine commands, and restores those faithful to his laws, to the esteem and affection of nations.—Since our dispersion innumerable changes have signalized the inconstancy of human affairs. Nations have successively expelled, inter-

mingled with, and overwhelmed each other. We have alone resisted the torrents of ages and revolutions.—Every thing presages to us in Europe a destiny more desirable, an existence less precarious; but this state of affairs is nothing yet but a pleasing perspective. But in the midst of public commotion, in the midst of the agitations of an immense nation, the reality of this prospect rises, conducted by a divine hand, and by one of those powerful minds, around which nations rally by a natural instinct of preservation.—This benevolent genius, and consoler, wishes to make disappear every humiliating distinction between us and his other subjects. His penetration has enabled him to discover in our Mosaic Code those principles of duration and strength, which have triumphed over the ravages of time, and which gave to our fathers that patriarchal simplicity, which, in our times, is still venerated, and that heroism of character of which history preserves such admirable models.—He has decided in his wisdom, that it would be suitable to his paternal views, to permit the convocation at Paris of a Grand Sanhedrin. The object and functions of this body are traced in the eloquent speech of the Commissioners of his Imperial and Royal Majesty. We address you, our dear brothers, to inform you that the mind which dictates this measure, has no other object than to recal us to our ancient virtue, and to preserve our holy religion in all its purity.—The appeal which we now make to you for the assistance of your abilities, in order to give to the decisions of the Grand Sanhedrin more weight and consideration, will produce the happy result of rendering all our uniform doctrinal principles more in unison with the civil and political laws of the different states which you have adopted for your country.—Instructions from you will be useful to us, and government authorizes us to claim your assistance.—Be not deaf to our call; our dear brothers choose men known for their wisdom, the friends of truth and of justice, and capable of concurring with us in this great work. Send them to take their places amongst us, and to impart to us their wise and enlightened views.—It must be highly desirable for all the Jews in Europe to co-operate in the regeneration of their brethren, as it is glorious for us in particular to have fixed the attention of a Sovereign so illustrious.—Never had any men on earth such powerful motives as ourselves to love and to admire this Sovereign, for it has never happened to us to

applaud an act of justice so splendid or a protection more marked. To restore to society a people estimable by their private virtues, to restore the opinion of their dignity, and assure to them the enjoyment of their rights, such are the benefits for which we are indebted to Napoleon the Great.—The Sovereign arbiter of nations and of Kings has permitted this empire to cicatrize its wounds, to restore that tranquillity which continued storms had interrupted, to aggrandize its destiny, to fix ours, and to give happiness to two nations who must ever applaud him to whom has been confided the care of their happiness after that of their defence.—*Paris, the 24th of Tisris, 567, (6th of Oct. 1806.)*

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPER.

ROME.—*Edict published by his Eminence the Cardinal Secretary of State, Dated Rome, September 17, 1806.*

We, &c. Although our Holy Father has no reason to fear, that the movements which have taken place in some parts of the provinces which adjoin his states, can disturb the tranquillity that the system of neutrality adopted by him has caused to prevail hitherto; nevertheless his Holiness has thought that it was necessary, in his wisdom, to take measures of precaution powerful enough to dissipate even the most remote uneasiness, and to secure more and more, both to his subjects and to strangers, the preservation of the peace which they enjoy. In the midst of the solitudes of every kind with which he is surrounded, his Holiness has experienced a great consolation in seeing that his continual cares, and those of the government, have had the happy effect of rendering still more and more the city of Rome and the state of the Church, a sore asylum to those who reside there. To remove, however, still more, every species of danger of seeing the public or private repose disturbed, we have received formal instructions to publish his intentions, which he wishes shall be faithfully executed.—ART. I. Whoever shall furnish either provisions, ammunition, or any thing else, to the rebels of the adjoining country, or shall give them an asylum, either by receiving them openly or clandestinely in their own houses, or by procuring them retreats elsewhere; or shall have any communica-

tion with them either by letters or by agents, or in any other manner, as by going to the places where they are, even although out of the States of His Holiness, every such person shall be considered as a state criminal, and be punished accordingly. No excuse shall be received either of consanguinity or friendship, or community of interest, or any thing of that sort. No man shall be permitted to say he has been forced by rebels to act so, unless he has immediately had recourse to the local Authorities to denounce the violence done to him, and to implore the assistance of the civil force which shall be immediately granted to him. 2d. Any individual, of what nation soever, shall be considered and adjudged a state criminal, who shall openly, or in secret, engage other persons to unite with rebels; or who shall endeavour to stir up any movement, whether against an individual, or especially if against a soldier belonging to a foreign nation, even although the attempts should fail of their effect. It shall be the same with respect to every person, who by letters or otherwise, shall endeavour to disturb the tranquillity and safety of any state whatever, although a foreign one. Every individual belonging to the rebels of the neighbouring districts, or who shall endeavour to introduce himself into the states of his Holiness, shall be arrested, and treated as a person guilty of violation of territory.—It is forbidden to every person to occupy himself with political disputes, or even political discussions, on public affairs; to speak against any power, or more especially to hold discourses capable of giving uneasiness and fomenting a spirit of party, whether in the streets and in public places, or even in private conversations. Imprisonment and the severest penalties shall be the punishment both of the speakers and the hearers.—All the ordinances of police respecting strangers are renewed.—The Congregation charged with objects of general Police is invested with all necessary powers, for proceeding without the ordinary formalities of justice, and from the simple notoriety of the fact, against every person, without distinction, who shall be guilty of any of the offences mentioned in this ordinance, or any of the same nature.—Given at the Palace of the Quirinal, 17th September.—(Signed) CASONI, Cardinal Secretary of State.